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The Preacher

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Homiletic Department of The Ecclesiastical Review

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The Preacher

HOMILETIC SUPPLEMENT OF

The Ecclesiastical Review

VOL. XXX MARCH, 1904 No. 3

PRIDE.—A FALL FROM GRACE.

Introduction.—The pharisee and the publican. (St. Luke 18.)
Point I . . .—God resisteth the proud.
Subdivision 1.—Pride, the parent of all sin.
Subdivision 2.—To the proud God refuses grace.
Subdivision 3.—Hence eternal loss.
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Point III . .—To the humble He gives glory.
Subdivision 1.—To Christ.
Subdivision 2.—To the Blessed Virgin Mary.
Subdivision 3.—To us all.
Conclusion. .—Bow down your hearts and your minds.

Text.—" God resisteth the proud, but to the humble he gives grace."—1 Peter 5 : 5.

INTRODUCTION.

Two men, said our Lord in one of His parables, went up into the temple to pray. One was a pharisee, a member of a sect which made profession of superior learning, minute observance of the law, and perfect holiness. Their reading was not only in the law, and in the inspired writings of the Scriptures, but also in the hundreds of volumes of commentaries thereon, which to them were as worthy of study and as important in observance as

the precepts of Holy Writ itself. They concerned themselves consequently about the interpretations and additions to the law made by the learned Rabbinical writers; and considered the threads of the fringe of their garments or the shape or position of their phylacteries of as much, and sometimes of more, importance than the commands of the Decalogue. Our Lord Himself charges them, "You make void the commandment of God for your traditions." In their piety they were, above all things, ostentatious. Our Lord rebukes them, that they love to pray on the street corners and in other public places, and to do their good works to be seen of men. Their piety was insincere and hypocritical. They were, again according to our Lord, whitened sepulchres, fair without, but inside full of corruption. Being prominent and influential in church and state, they were usually wealthy and honored. We can therefore readily imagine the pompous demeanor of the specimen of this class of whom the parable speaks, as he stands before the altar and utters boasts instead of prayers. "O God, I give thee thanks that I am not as the rest of men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, as also is this publican. I fast twice in the week; I give tithes of all that I possess." His pride is in contrast with the humility of the publican, who stands afar off, and would not so much as lift up his eyes toward heaven, but struck his breast saying, "O God, be merciful to me a sinner." The publican of those days was the tax-gatherer. He represented an alien power and for that reason was hateful to the people. The system of farming taxes was universal in those days, and even at a much later date. It is the cause of many of the insurrections that we hear of in the East even now. The government sold the revenues of a certain district to an individual who then proceeded, with government help, to regain what he had paid and as much as he could out of the people. The system is manifestly open to many objections, leaving room for abuse and oppression on a vast scale. The publican therefore, in the eyes of the Jew, was an oppressor, an extortioner, and a tool of the Roman. Such possibly was the publican of the Gospel. Whatever his virtues, whatever his vices (and we are not told whether or not he was a great offender), he knew himself to be an unworthy sinner in the sight of God, and therefore our Lord decided—"This man went down into his house justified rather than the other, because every one

that exalteth himself, shall be humbled: and he that humbleth himself, shall be exalted."

POINT I.

"God resisteth the proud." Pride is defined to be an inordinate desire for honor, reverence, and admiration. It has many degrees and not a few species; but that which is common to them all is a good conceit of ourselves and a desire to have others esteem us at the same valuation. It was the source of the sin of the angels and of our first parents. In short, according to the teaching of the Fathers and of Holy Writ, it is the seed and fruit of all offending. He who commits any sin, necessarily attempts to make himself independent of God and His laws. He says, in effect, with the rebellious angels, "I will not serve." This is pride, and it is a necessary preliminary to all grievous sin.

God resists those who harbor this unjust and rebellious thought by refusing them His divine grace. For sin and grace cannot exist together. The withdrawal of grace naturally results in a darkening of the intellect, an inability to see God and our fellowmen, and our necessary relations to them in a just and proper proportion. Standing on an imaginary height and looking down, it is deceived by the perspective and consequently falls. Foolishness is the immediate result. We all readily laugh at the vanity of others, but the depth of the folly of thoughts of pride should be viewed with sorrow. When God punished the pride of Nabuchodonosor by madness, it was but the appropriate sequel of his folly. Without grace man is helpless. Abandoned to his own folly, to the guidance of a mind blinded by pride, what can be expected but a fall. Therefore it is said that pride goeth before destruction. For this sin, like all other sins unrepented and unamended, is sure to result in eternal destruction.

POINT II.

The graces which God refuses to the proud He gives to the humble. Humility is, as the Fathers assure us, if not the greatest of all virtues, a necessary foundation for them all. Meekness, a lowly estimation of themselves, is common to all the saints. Amongst the bravest are the tenderest, the wisest, the simplest, the highest in rank, the most lowly in spirit. To be high-spirited may not necessarily be a vice, but it certainly must be a bad ideal to

set oneself up for admiration, when all the saints of God have gloried only in their infirmities, when Christ Himself and His Blessed Mother were glorified by God for their humility. It is a necessary ingredient of contrition. The man who in examining his conscience or confessing his sins, wilfully entertains a thought comparing himself favorably with others, is in no disposition to obtain forgiveness. Even though the fact be that he is better or not so bad as another, it can only disturb his contrition to dwell for a moment on such an idea. Magdalen on the ground drying the feet of our Lord, unconscious of, or bowing beneath the scoffs of Simon, the master of the house, is the model of every penitent. If then you would enjoy the grace of God, the grace of repentance, the grace to resist temptation, the grace to practise any virtue, you must first bow down your heads and your hearts even to the dust in the presence of God. At best you are and must realize that you are unprofitable servants. Seek not to compare yourself with others. At the best it can but make you unfit for God's grace; at most it may be as with the pharisee, blasphemous arrogance. Grace follows humility; glory is the natural sequel of grace. He that humbleth himself shall be exalted, perhaps in this world, certainly hereafter.

Christ Himself as man was rewarded with glory because He humbled Himself. Listen to the words of St. Paul: "Christ humbled Himself even to the death of the cross. For which cause [could the relation be more forcibly expressed] God hath exalted Him." (Phil. 2: 8.)

Christ's Blessed Mother attributes honor—the honor all nations pay her—to humility—"The Lord hath regarded the humility of His handmaid: for behold all generations shall call me blessed." (Luke 2: 48.) Yet even while mentioning the praises the millions of devoted Christians shall shower upon her, she thinks only of Him, the source of her honor, even then—"My soul doth magnify the Lord, and holy is His Name." For us, unless our honor be God's honor—and who can assure us of that?—we should seek no glory from men. Put aside the thought of the esteem of men; leave that to God; and fear rather than rejoice that on the last day, at least, He will do justice to our fame. God forbid that we should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ by which the world is crucified to us and we to the world! Clinging to that in humility and

forgetfulness of self, we may hope to share in Christ's glory in heaven. For "God will save the humble of spirit," and "The fruit of humility is the fear of the Lord, riches and glory and life." (Prov. 22 : 4.)

Conclusion.

"Be humble therefore in the sight of the Lord" (James 4 : 10). It is the advice of everyone who has learned anything of the science of salvation. Our Lord Himself would have you learn the same lesson of Him: "Learn of Me, for I am meek and humble of heart" (Matt. 2 : 13), "and you shall have rest for your souls." Humility is the condition on which rest is promised us both in this world and in the next. If you have difficulty in attaining it, know thyself; think on thine own sins; think on thy helplessness without God's help; think upon the saints who have done so much more than you have done, no matter what your worth; think upon Gethsemani and Calvary, and your sins the cause of it all; and learn on the cross itself the littleness of all that is not God.

References.

Holy Scripture.—He shall save the humble of spirit.—Ps. 38 : 19.

I hate arrogance and pride.—Prov. 8 : 13.

Humility goeth before glory.—Prov. 15 : 33.

Every proud man is an abomination to the Lord.—Prov. 16 : 5.

Pride goeth before destruction.—Prov. 16 : 18.

Hast thou seen a man wise in his own conceit? There shall be more hope of a fool than of him.—Prov. 26 : 12.

Pride is hateful before God and men.—Eccl. 10 : 7.

Pride is the beginning of all sin : he that holdeth it shall be filled with maledictions and it shall ruin him in the end.—Eccl. 10 : 15.

Never suffer pride to reign in thy mind or in thy words : for from it all perdition took its beginning.—Job 4 : 14.

Learn of Me, because I am meek and humble of heart.—Matt. 11 : 29.

Whosoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled, and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.—Matt. 23 : 12.

He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and hath exalted the humble.—Luke 1 : 5.

What hast thou that thou hast not received ? and if thou hast received, why dost thou glory as if thou hast not received it ?—1 Cor. 4 : 7.

God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.—Gal. 6 : 14.

Holy Fathers.—Humility is the mother of wisdom.—Chrys., *Hom. 48—Matt.*

God is humble ; let man be ashamed to be proud.—St. Aug. *in Ps. 52.*

In the weakness of humility the virtue of charity is made perfect.—St. Aug., *L. de Trin. 4.*

Other vices have place in evil deeds. Pride alone is to be feared in our good deeds.—St. Aug., *de Nat. et Grat.*

Truly he is stainless who has no pride, for this is the last with those who return to God, the first with those who depart from Him.—St. Aug., *in Ps. 19.*

He who amasses virtues with humility carries dust through the mud.—St. Greg., *Hom. 7 in Joan.*

He who is vile in his own estimation is dear to God.—Ber., *Tract. de Int. Dom. Ch. 28.*

Love to be unknown and reputed as nothing.—*Imit. of Christ, Bk. I, Ch. 2.*

Humility is the foundation of all virtues ; there is no better disposition for obtaining heavenly gifts.— St. Augustine.

Be abject in your own eyes, and think yourself happy to be thought so by others ; be not puffed up by the gifts of God,—then you will be perfectly humble.—St. Bernard.

COVETOUSNESS.—THE "ALMIGHTY DOLLAR."

Introduction.—The desire for riches.

Point I. . . .—Wealth's power for good.

Subdivision 1.—It fails in many things.

Subdivision 2.—It works good to others.

Point II. . .—Its power for evil.

Subdivision 1.—Self-conceit.

Subdivision 2.—Self-indulgence.

Subdivision 3.—Selfishness.

Point III. .—Christ's teaching.
Subdivision 1.—Can a rich man be saved?
Subdivision 2.—By using his riches for others.
Conclusion. .—Detach the heart from, and so make friends of Mammon.

Text.—"If riches abound, set not your heart on them."—Ps. 61 : 11.

INTRODUCTION.

Outsiders commonly suppose our nation to be entirely absorbed in the pursuit and the worship of the "almighty dollar." At home also, that large class of literary mountebanks who imagine that the whole art of criticism consists in finding some means of defiling one's own nest, in finding fault with the persons and institutions in favor of which one might be supposed to be somewhat prejudiced, join clamorously in the same cry. Like most generalizations, the statement has a leaven of truth in it that serves to puff up a quantity of falsehood into a great mass of assertion. Americans are certainly not more avaricious, or more tenacious of their money than other nations; but being more energetic, more strenuous in the pursuit of their desires, they seem to desire more than others. Enough of the inordinate passion for money-getting there undoubtedly is; enough to make us blush for the advanced nation that has found no means to prevent the accumulation and abuse of such vast fortunes, side by side with so much want, ignorance and wretchedness. Here, however, in God's house, we have less to do with the great economic questions involved in this matter, than in the degree to which we may be guilty of wrong ourselves.

The possession of wealth is in itself neither good nor evil. The desire for acquisition is a self-preservative instinct good in itself, but bad and productive of much evil in its excess. That desire, kept within the bounds of reason, governed by the laws of justice and charity, and directed to the possession of riches for good purposes, is commendable. Let us examine then into this pursuit of wealth as we, Americans, in the twentieth century, may be following it, and compare the practice with the teachings of Christ and of His Church.

POINT I.

Money can do anything; so cry the worshippers of the Golden Calf. Not quite. It cannot heal an injured conscience,

though it may act as a counter-irritant. It cannot minister to a mind diseased, though it may politely hide the complaint. It cannot soothe the throbbings of a wounded heart, but it has found an efficient plaster for excitation in the place where a heart ought to be. It cannot buy heaven, nor bribe Divine Justice. Yet there are many, very many good things that it can do. Money, being made to pass from hand to hand, does good only when it is transferred from one possessor to another. Then it partakes of the quality of mercy, and blesses him that gives and him that takes. Given in alms, it may relieve the sufferings of the receiver, and may through grace help to work the salvation of the giver. It may be devoted to the thousand and one bodily and spiritual needs of our fellowman, to remove ignorance, to dispel prejudice, to remove temptation, to draw the penitent to good. It may procure alleviation of the sufferings of the invalid, and soothe the feelings of the mourner by burying the dead. It can aid in the spread of the knowledge of religious truth, and help in the religious enlightenment of our great country. In a word, judiciously expended and unselfishly applied, it opens to its possessor a new world of good works that is closed to others; may work the greater good of many fellowmen, may promote their spiritual welfare, and the glory of God, and so the eternal salvation of the one who so applies it.

Point II.

The man who sets his heart upon amassing money either for its own sake or for the worldly pleasures it may purchase for him, assumes a burden that has borne down many even to hell. And this is true not only of the one who actually possesses it, but of him who quests for it with such ends in view. Like everything we have received, it is given us in trust for God and for our fellowmen, and our profit in it is in the fidelity with which we discharge the trust. It is a temptation to riotous living, whence come broken health and eternal loss; to pride before God and men, and that leads to neglect of religious duties and loss of faith. The poor are usually the more faithful Catholics. It makes men selfish and hard of heart toward others, even to direct violations of the law of justice. It is so well known that it is almost needless to remark, that there are business methods in vogue to-day, tolerated by the laws, unrebuked, nay approved

by public opinion, which are inconsistent, not only with the laws of God's eternal justice, but in direct variance with Christ's law of charity. The portentous economic questions that hang in threatening clouds over the world's peace to-day are all solvable by the teachings of Christ. Trusts, corporate greed, political "graft," disputes over the price of labor, and the wrongs which precede, accompany and follow their discussion, may, no doubt must, be curbed by legislative enactments; but it is a provable fact, and not a pious imagination, that they neither can nor ever will be completely and equitably disposed of except by the application of the rule: "As you would that men should do to you, do you also to them in like manner" (Luke 6:31).

POINT III.

Some of the sayings of Christ and the teaching of the inspired writers on this subject seem to be very strong and severe; for example, "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven." Most certainly this and the like passages are not meant to declare the doctrine tha no rich man can possibly be saved. Yet "my words shall not pass away" (Matt. 24:35). Their teaching, if it is not to pass as the idle wind, must have a much stronger meaning than is commonly ascribed to it. It must mean that affection for riches, either present or to come, is an almost if not quite insuperable obstacle to salvation; that the possession of abundance entails an absolute obligation; no mere magnanimous shame for dying rich, but a positive obligation to dispose of our superfluity to others for good purposes. More, the rich man is bound not merely to get rid of his superabundance, of what is more than he can use in a Christian manner of life, but he is bound to invest it as well as he knows how, so as to bring in the largest measure of profit to the glory of God and the good of his fellows. Theologians hold it as a mark of most grievous sin, when "woe" is denounced in Holy Writ, or the punishment of hell awarded to any act.

It would be hard to find in all Scripture any sin denounced more strongly or more frequently than the selfish abuse of wealth, than the crime of those "who join house to house, and field to field, to the end of the place," as if their doing so was no one's concern but their own. "It is mine. I can do what I please

with it," can be justly said by God alone, and only when God is referred to can such a doctrine of absolute, irresponsible ownership be found taught in God's word. Man holds absolutely nothing, not even his own life on such terms.

(For Scriptural quotations, see References.)

Conclusion.

Therefore if your riches abound, set not your heart on them. If you have enough to serve your good purposes, seek not to acquire more. If you have wealth, use it scrupulously well, as having to render an account of your stewardship to God. If it is lost to you, let your heart be so detached that you can say cheerfully in the words of holy Job: "The Lord hath given and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Turn earthly dross into treasure that will endure in heaven, invest your dollar with Him who is really Almighty, "make to yourselves friends of the Mammon of iniquity, that when you shall fail, they may receive you into everlasting dwellings." (Luke 16: 9.)

References.

Holy Scripture.—The rich man, when he shall sleep, shall take away nothing with him; he shall open his eyes and find nothing; poverty like water shall take hold on him; a tempest shall oppress him in the night.—Job 27: 19, 20.

If riches abound, set not your heart on them.—Ps. 16: 11.

Better is a little with the fear of the Lord, than great riches without content.—Prov. 10: 22.

Lift not thy eyes to riches which thou canst not have.—Prov. 23: 5.

Gold and silver hath destroyed many.—Eccl. 8: 3.

The house that is very rich, shall be brought to nothing by pride.—Eccl. 21: 5.

Blessed is the rich man that hath not gone after gold nor put his trust in money nor in treasures.—Eccl. 31: 8.

Gold is a stumbling-block to them that sacrifice to it.—*Ibid.*, 7.

Woe to you that join house to house and field to field unto the end of the place; shall you alone dwell in the midst of the earth?—Is. 5: 8.

Lay not up to yourselves treasures on earth, where the rust and the moth consume, and where thieves break through and steal.—Matt. 6: 19.

Where thy treasure is, there is thy heart also.—Matt. 6: 21.

You cannot serve God and Mammon.—Matt. 6: 24.

Amen, I say to you, a rich man shall hardly enter the kingdom of heaven. Again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.—Matt. 14: 23.

They that will become rich, fall into temptation and the snare of the devil.—1 Tim. 6: 17.

Covetousness, which is the service of idols.—Col. 3: 5.

Go to now, ye rich men; weep and howl in your miseries which shall come upon you.—James 5: 1.

Ephraim said, But yet I am become rich, I have found me an idol; all my labors shall not find me any iniquity, that I have committed.—Osee 12: 8.

Holy Fathers.—He who uses riches badly is wretched, like one who has wounded himself with the sword he drew to wound his enemy.—St. Greg. Naz.

Riches are an obstacle to virtue in the unjust, a help to the just.—St. Ambr., *in Luc.*

The greatest of riches is to have no want of riches.—St. John Chrys., *Hom. 23.*

Blessed is he who does not strive for that which is a burden when possessed, a defilement when loved, a torment when lost.—St. John Chrys., *Ep. 103.*

He who loves to be rich, is poor.—St. Aug., *in Matt.*

They who have become rich through wrong-doing, are in the greatest want.—St. Aug., *De Ver. Innoc.*, C. 85.

Gold and silver, as far as concerns the soul's good, are neither good nor bad; their use is good, their abuse is bad, desire for them is worse, and ardent longing most vile.—St. Bern., *in Sentent.*

No soldier carries luxuries to the field.—Tertul., *adv. Marcion.*

You are over-nice, my brother, if you seek to rejoice with the world and afterwards to reign with Christ.—St. Jer., *in Ep.*

SLOTH.—THE "HICKORY CATHOLIC."

Introduction.—Varieties of Catholics.
Point I. . . .—The "Hickory Catholic."
Subdivision 1.—Neglects religious obligations.
Subdivision 2.—Neglects pious observances.
Subdivision 3.—Slights Church interests.
Point II. . .—An incubus on the community.
Subdivision 1.—A stumbling-block.
Subdivision 2.—A scandal.
Point III. . .—Hence his fall.
Subdivision 1.—His loss of faith.
Subdivision 2.—His loss of grace.
Subdivision 3.—His impending eternal loss.
Conclusion. .—Our Catholicity should be strenuous.

Text.—"No man putting his hand to the plough and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of heaven."—Luke 9 : 62.

Introduction.

It takes many sorts of men to make a world. Our Lord tells us that there are many mansions, and therefore presumably many sorts of occupants, in our Father's house. Hence it is not surprising that in the one sheepfold on earth there should be sheep of varying size and length of wool, different varieties of Catholics. One in unity with Christ the head of the Church, one in faith, one in allegiance to the authorities He has constituted, all Catholics must be. Yet even within these limits there is great variance. There is the sturdy Catholic, whose faith is firm and bold, whose obedience is ready and unhesitating, whose earnestness and zeal in all things Catholic are as splendid as they are genuine and prompt. Such a one (to use the now popular addition) might well be called a strenuous Catholic. There are many steps between the topmost and the lowest round of the ladder, but, not to go outside the pale of the Church, that at the bottom is the one sometimes called the "hickory Catholic." We have taken this species as the subject of to-day's discourse, not because he is a pleasant subject for contemplation, but because in the study of the class we may recognize a certain prominent trait in his character as a component part of our own, and finding it we will of course endeavor to eliminate it.

POINT I.

Sloth in spiritual matters is this distinguishing characteristic. He may be, and often is an energetic and industrious man of the world, but in religious affairs he suffers miserably (let us by all means be polite) from a sort of prostration of the will. On pay-day, or when there is business to be done, he is promptness itself; but his alarm clock, more Catholic than himself, does not work on Sundays. Consequently he often misses Mass, or else arrives so late as to effect nothing but the disturbance of those who are there with a purpose. The obligation of contributing to the support of the Church and pastor he holds worthy of serious consideration, at home on collection Sunday. The solemn law of Easter Confession and Communion is obeyed grudgingly and at the last moment, if his prostration is not in an advanced stage. As the disease progresses, the obligation is discharged, if at all, about December 31st.

It goes without saying that the pious practices dear to every Catholic of a sturdier type are totally disregarded. Morning prayers, family prayers, grace at meals and the instruction of his family require more energy of faith than he is capable of. Vespers, Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, Forty Hours' Adoration, and other special devotions he leaves to women and children (if he happens to be a man). He is fond of saying that he does not believe in persons who are always praying, or always in church, and in this respect his practice does not belie his principles. His confessor is not worn out by the frequency of his confessions, nor his own knees scarified by the length of his prayers.

Needless also to say that he can spare no vital force to devote to the interest of Catholic enterprises. He is neither a missionary nor does he support missionaries. Among Catholic Societies or Sodalities he is not known, and Catholic literature is a sealed library to him. He is not seen at church entertainments, nor is he one of the long-suffering individuals who pass around the collection basket. The weight of his own contribution is perhaps as much as he can carry, so he prefers to let the basket pass him. The Sunday-school needs teachers, but he is not there. Ushers are wanted to keep order in the church, good Christians, followers of Christ to sit up with the sick at night, active mem-

bers of the St. Vincent de Paul Society are in demand, but the pastor skips his name when looking over his lists in search of recruits. . . . In short, his Catholic good works are next to nothing, and his faith is therefore not far from the zero mark.

POINT II.

The "hickory Catholic" is a positive obstacle to the good of the community. Plans for good works are thwarted and hindered wherever this class abounds. The burden of church building, church support and the maintenance of schools is thrown on other more willing shoulders. The pastor must figure upon him not merely as counting for nothing in parish work of a spiritual nature, but as an incubus whose weight must drag upon anything like enthusiastic progress. And worse still, his bad example infects those better than himself. For every man who comes late to Mass on one Sunday there will probably be several on the next. Much of the pastor's time must be spent in the unpleasant task of undoing the work of the "hickory Catholics" of his flock. In short, the only success to which he contributes is the success of a mission. There he may serve as an example of what men should not do, or may figure as a convert. Even this, however, he can only accomplish by amending his ways and deserting the "hickory" class.

POINT III.

One of the effects of his mode of living is the loss of faith. If faith without works is dead, as St. James assures us, this man's faith is certainly dead or dying. And if he persists in retaining its corpse, it can be only in the form of the indelible baptismal mark, which will brand him as a renegade to his God, through the eternity of misery to which he is, perhaps slowly, but certainly sinking. God gives his graces freely and the gift of faith is most precious. But they all will be withdrawn, unless they be welcomed, cherished and employed.

With faith go the other graces that preserve from sin, until the subject has little sense of moral responsibility left. We cannot separate our duties toward God. He who neglects to obey one law will soon become indifferent to the rest.

God requires zeal in His service; there can be no such thing

as indifference, no idleness, no standing still on the road to heaven. There must be no looking back from the task that is assigned to us, no burying of our talent in the ground. Energy and activity, violent activity, are necessary to salvation. He who does not strive to be always active can expect no other end than that of the wicked and slothful servant, to be cast out into exterior darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Conclusion.

"Now is the hour for us to rise from sleep." If our discharge of religious duties has hitherto been heartless and perfunctory, limited by the bounds of strict obligation; if our prayers have been few and cold, and our observance of the commandments merely a matter of custom or a matter of fear, it is time to awake, and to stir up the grace of God that is within us. Awake to a new life of energy worthy of the service of Him whose magnanimity in our behalf carried Him even to the cross. Take His yoke upon you cheerfully, and set your shoulders against it manfully, doing a man's share of the work God has assigned to you. Take up your cross and bear your share of trial, suffering and labor, if you profess to be followers of Him who died upon the cross.

References.

Holy Scripture.—My soul hath slumbered through heaviness.—Ps. 118: 28.

Go to the ant, O sluggard, and learn wisdom.—Prov. 6: 6.

How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard.—Prov. 6: 8.

Slothfulness casteth into a deep sleep, and the idle soul shall suffer hunger.—Prov. 19: 15.

In all thy works be quick—Eccl. 31: 27.

Cursed is he that doth the work of the Lord deceitfully.—Jer. 48: 10.

Cursed is the deceitful man, that offereth in sacrifice that which is feeble to the Lord.—Mal. 1: 14.

Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after justice.—Matt. 5: 6.

Be you therefore perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect.—Matt. 5: 48.

The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent bear it away.—Matt. 11 : 12.

He that is not with me, is against me.—Matt. 12 : 30.

Why stand you here all the day idle.—Matt. 20 : 6.

Now is the hour for us to rise from sleep.—Rom. 13 : 11.

Even as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.—James 2 : 26.

I have somewhat against thee because thou hast left thy first charity.—Apoc. 2 : 4.

I would thou wert cold or hot, but because thou art lukewarm and neither cold nor hot, I will begin to vomit thee forth from my mouth.—Apoc. 3 : 15.

Holy Fathers.—Abraham ran, his wife hastened, his servant hurried ; all were urgent. No one is indolent in the house where charity reigns.—Orig., *in Gen. 18.*

The grace of the Holy Ghost knows no procrastination.—St. Ambr., L. 1, C. 5, *de Abrah.*

The Lord is asleep to the lukewarm, he is wakeful to the perfect.—*Id., Ibid.*

We need promptness, great earnestness, a soul ready unto death, otherwise we may not follow the King who was nailed to the cross.—St. John Chrys., *Hom. 31, ad Pop.*

Remember that it is not the indifferent, not the inactive, but the violent that bear away the kingdom of heaven.—St. Aug., *in Ps. 69.*

Love works great things ; if it refuses to work, it is not love. —St. Greg., *Moral.*

Let us put away this pernicious lukewarmness which provokes God to vomit.—St. Bernard.

The soul which loves ardently, runs swiftly and reaches the goal first ; he who wishes to reach it must not only not go backward, but must not even hesitate.—St. Bernard., *Serm. 3 in Cant.*

"Take my yoke upon you, and you shall find rest for your souls." O wonderful novelty ! They take up a yoke, and they find rest.—St. Bern., *in Declam.*

ENVY.—THE VENOM OF ASPS.

Introduction.—The rebel angels.
Point I. . . .—What is envy?
Subdivision 1.—Its history.
Subdivision 2.—Its effects.
Subdivision 3.—Its nature.
Point II. . .—Its remedy.
Subdivision 1.—Charity.
Subdivision 2.—Meekness.
Subdivision 3.—Meditation.
Conclusion. .—Envy not.

Text.—"The venom of asps is under their lips."—Rom. 3: 13.

Introduction.

The first of all sins may be said to have been committed in heaven itself. It was that of the rebellious angels. Interpreting the various references that are made in Holy Scripture to this sin, theological writers hold that Lucifer, the light-bearer, the brightest and highest of the angelic hosts, was enraged because it was revealed to him that God the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity was to ennoble a nature inferior to that of the angels by becoming man. Stirred up by envy, he dared to raise himself against the will of God. How shall we depict what ensued? How shall we in human words convey ideas of heaven?

Michael and the heavenly hosts who remained faithful rose up with the cry, "Who is like to God," and thrust these infatuated creatures from the light of Divine Love into the eternal gloom of hell. Thenceforth Lucifer was Satan, and his angel followers, devils. Thenceforward their heaven-born faculties were devoted to evil, to frustrating the designs of God and injuring His creatures in the human nature He was to adopt. The envy that begot the first sin, propagated itself and continues to reproduce, through envy, temptation and sins of all kinds.

Point I.

This envy, this sorrow at another's good, has had a fearful history, which should warn all to beware of receiving its poison into their system. Satan's first act of temptation was performed

in the guise of a serpent, and after the manner of a serpent he has been spreading the venom of his envy ever since; and he finds the poison one of his most effective means for accomplishing his dire intentions. To Adam and Eve he suggested envy of God's perfections. "You shall become as gods, knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3: 5). Cain was angry because his brother was better than he; and consequently Abel's gifts were more acceptable to God (Gen. 4: 7), and so came about the first murder. Esau's hostility to Jacob arose from envy; Joseph was sold by his brethren; Core, Dathan and Abiron raised sedition against Moses; Saul sought to kill David—and all through envy; nay—did not Pilate himself perceive, when Christ was brought before him by the priests, "that for envy they had delivered Him" (Matt. 27: 18). Thus, through all the history of mankind the virus of the old serpent has been constantly reinfused into human veins, and it has wrought an incalculable amount of harm. Other passions seem to prompt to individual acts of sin, but this appears as if it were almost an infection, transmitted continuously in the race. It is closely allied both with pride and anger, and together with them may be said to be the parent of many sins. Saint Thomas Aquinas enumerates the following "daughters of envy": hatred, murmuring, detraction, rejoicing at another's harm, grieving at another's good; and St. Paul, as St. Cyprian holds, was referring to the envious when he said, "The venom of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace they have not known" (Rom. 3: 13–18).

St. Cyprian further mentions the following as the fruits of envy; hatred, animosity, avarice, ambition, pride, cruelty, faithlessness, discord, anger, heresy and schism. Truly a numerous brood, even for a reptile; a horrible progeny, even from the old serpent himself. To trace the connection of each with its parent might be a task somewhat too lengthy, but the fearful array even of their names is sufficient to warn us to take all care lest we fall into this vice. The envious man is sometimes, though not necessarily, proud. He may have a high esteem of his own perfections and is therefore more easily blinded to another's worth. An envy of perhaps a more violent form is that of the man who knows himself to be of little worth, yet resents the worthiness of others,

as if it were an injury to him. In either case the victim of the vice is most miserable. In most vices there is more or less of the allurement of pleasure, but here the sinner preys upon himself and makes himself the more unhappy because of the happiness of others; more guilty because of another's virtue. He is not unlike the reptile who being unable to revenge himself upon his enemy, stings himself to death. Child of Satan as this vice is, one would think that no other would adopt it. Who but the great enemy of God and man could be grieved because of another's virtue? who but his children? Who but a child of the great enemy could be moved to anger by the holiness of Christ, the purity of the Virgin Mother, the sanctity of the saints? Yet, have we not known them to be hated? Why else were the saints persecuted? Why else was Jesus crucified?

POINT II.

As antidotes against the power of the vice, cultivate meekness. Recall the ineffable sweetness of temper of our Lord, who "offered His cheek to the smiter," and who bade us "turn the other cheek to him who strikes us"; who was "dumb as a lamb before his shearer," and who laid down His life for His persecutors. Practise humility, for since a high estimation of our own worth is a ready temptation to unhappiness in the worth or honor in another, it follows that a mean opinion or rather correct valuation of ourselves, and an indifference to the esteem of others, will be an excellent preservative against the danger of envy. Our Lord Himself, though His greatness was infinite, sought not His own honor, and was readily content to be, from Bethlehem to Calvary, the despised and rejected of men. To us He prescribes—"Go, sit down in the lowest place. He that is lesser among you all is the greater" (Luke 9: 14). Christ is our model and our preceptor, and only in following Him can we hope to escape this, the wiliest, the most insidious of the deceits of the tempter. Practise above all things, charity. St. Paul, writing to the Corinthians, speaks of charity as the very reverse of all those things which St. Cyprian names as the companions of envy. "Charity is patient, is kind; charity envieth not, dealeth not perversely, is not puffed up; is not ambitious, seeketh not her own, is not provoked to anger, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth with the truth; charity never

falleth away, whether prophecies be made void, or tongues shall cease, or knowledge shall be destroyed." (1 Cor. 13: 4, 5, 6, 8.) Many-limbed for evil as envy is, charity has as many arms strong in virtue; it is therefore the most effectual opponent to aid us in crushing the asp. The love of God and His perfections; the love of holiness and all who practise it; the love of our enemies, peremptorily demanded of all who claim the name of Christian,—these leave no space through which the serpent may enter, leave no room for envy. Shall we who follow Christ give place to His enemy? His love is the antidote for the poison.

Conclusion.

"Envy not the glory and riches of a sinner" (Eccl. 9: 16). "Envy not the unjust man, and do not follow his ways" (Prov. 3: 31). Envy not another either the gifts he has received from God,—bodily strength or beauty, riches or family or friends; nor the gifts of soul; intelligence of will, grace or sanctity; for they that do such things shall not obtain the kingdom of God. (Gal. 5: 26.) The angels of God rejoice over one sinner doing penance. Do you then rejoice with them over another's good, weep for his evil. "Rejoice with them that rejoice, weep with them that weep" (Rom. 12: 15).

References.

Holy Scripture.—Soundness of heart is the life of the flesh; but envy is the rottenness of the bones.—Prov. 14: 30.

By the envy of the devil death came into the world:—and they follow him that are of his side.—Wis. 2: 24, 25.

Neither will I go with consuming envy; for such a man will not be partaker of wisdom.—Wis. 6: 25.

An evil man shall inherit reproach and shame, so shall every sinner that is envious and double-tongued.—Eccl. 6: 1.

The eye of the envious is wicked; and he turneth away his face, and despiseth his own soul.—Eccl. 14: 8.

Envy slayeth the little one.—Job 5: 2.

Let us walk honestly as in the day; not in contention and envy.—Rom. 13: 13.

Whereas there is among you envying and contention, are you not carnal, and walk according to man?—1 Cor. 3: 3.

If you bite and devour one another, take heed that you be not consumed one by another.—Gal. 5 : 15.

The works of the flesh are manifest, which are : contentions, emulations, dissensions, sects, envies and such like. Of the which I foretell you that they who do such things shall not obtain the kingdom of God.—Gal. 5 : 19, 21.

Let us not be made desirous of vain-glory, provoking one another, envying one another.—Gal. 5 : 26.

Laying away all malice and envies.—1 Peter 2 : 1.

Where envy and contention is, there is inconstancy and every evil work.—James 3 : 16.

Holy Fathers.—The first born of pride is vain-glory, which when it has corrupted the mind, begets envy.—St. Greg., *Moral L. 31, Ch. 17.*

Although the poison of the old enemy is infused into the human heart with every act of vice committed ; yet with this sin the serpent seems to hurl the whole contents of his poison glands.—St. Greg., *Moral L. 5, Ch. 17.*

Nothing should be more carefully guarded against by the Christian, nothing more carefully prevented than being taken captive by envy and malice.

How great an evil is that whereby an angel fell.

Jealousy is the root of all evils, the fountain of disasters, the nursery of crimes, the material of transgressions.

Jealousy has no limit, it is an evil continually enduring, and a sin without end. It is a calamity without remedy.

He (the devil) was infected with his own envy as with poison and passed from good to evil. From which it appears that the source of all evil is envy.—Lact., *Inst. L. II, Ch. 9.*

You see, brethren, how envy and jealousy led to the murder of a brother (Abel). Owing to envy and jealousy the greatest and most zealous pillars of the Church have been persecuted and put to death.—St. Clem., *Ep. 1, Ch. 4, 5.*

What is envy ? A shocking evil. By this evil was the devil cast down.—St. Aug., *Tr. V., in Joan.*

Envy is such that no worse evil can exist. As beetles feed on dung, so do these men on the calamities of others, being a sort of common foes and enemies of our nature.—St. Chrys., *Hom. II, Matt.*

GLUTTONY.—VS. FASTING.

Introduction.—The temptation of Christ.
Point I. . . .—Gluttony.
Subdivision 1.—In costliness of food.
Subdivision 2.—In quantity.
Point II. . . .—Drunkenness.
Subdivision 1.—Its effects.
Subdivision 2.—Harmful mistakes.
Point III. . .—Fasting.
Subdivision 1.—Necessity of fasting.
Subdivision 2.—Its effects.
Conclusion. .—Not by bread alone.

Text.—"Not in bread alone doth man live, but in every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God."—Matt. 4 : 5.

Introduction.

Some few leagues from the western bank of the river Jordan, to the north of the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, is a precipitous mountain, rising twelve or fifteen hundred feet above the plain, which is called Quarantana by Western writers. Not far from its base is the brook Carith where Elias sought refuge from the persecutions of Achab and Jezebel, and where needful food was supplied to him by the ravens. (3 Kings 17.) Here or hereabouts St. John the Baptist spent his years of mortification in preparation for his mission of preaching penance. Here also is the traditional site of our Lord's forty days' fast and temptation. Here, for our instruction our Lord saw fit to mortify His human appetites by fasting. Christ's human passions were so entirely subject to His human will, and that in turn was in such perfect accord with the Divine Will, that He certainly had no need of mortification to enable Him to resist the suggestion of Satan. For our instruction then, when hungry from His forty days' fast, He refused to work a miracle for the satisfaction of His hunger, though the miracle would have been perfectly possible and lawful to Him. To the tempter's advice, "command that these stones be made bread," He replied, "not in bread alone doth man live, but in every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God." A lesson surely for us who put our comfort and the satisfaction of

our desires in a place far too high in comparison with the hearing and keeping of the Word of God.

With us there is always the danger that the cravings of nature may obtain undue influence in determining our actions, may dominate our better reason, and turn a very natural and serviceable desire into a tyrannical power ruling us for evil. The appetite is given us as an aid to the performance of the functions necessary for the support of life ; without it we might very easily neglect a duty so much beneath our higher spiritual nature. The sick whose relish for food is gone, can scarcely be persuaded to take what is necessary for their sustenance. Those who are deeply immersed in intellectual pursuits are commonly very negligent of the demands of nature. The saints whose thoughts are occupied with their Father's business, with every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God, despise anything more than is necessary to support life for their high intents. God has even performed miracles in their behalf to exempt them from the necessity of food and drink. To us then Christ, His Church and His saints commend the practice of voluntary abstinence from food and drink, as a preventive and cure for the evils which over-indulgence in these matters entails and as a corrective for the passions which these excesses inflame.

Point I.

Excess in the use of food either in quality or quantity is sin, possibly grievous sin. Moreover, it is one of those sins which is seldom considered, seldom adverted to, and consequently frequently committed, at least materially, to the great injury of body and soul.

We are guilty before Almighty God if the cost of our table is so great as to cause us to scant the nourishment of our souls, or the souls of those under our care. Does this never happen ? Think again. Are there not many families who, if they practised greater frugality, and healthful frugality at that, could afford their children better education, more good books for their households, enlarged contributions for religious and charitable purposes, and more time and health to devote to every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God ?

If our brethren are in want (and the poor we have always

with us), can our common Father in heaven look with indifference upon our luxury? Dives, the rich man of Christ's parable, is accused of no crime except faring sumptuously every day, and disregarding the needs of the beggar at his gate. Our modern monopolists would probably phrase it that he used his own as he pleased, and minded his own affairs. Yet he was condemned to hell, and reduced to beg of the beggar for a drop of water to cool his tongue. It is worth while considering if there be not a deeper significance and a more practical application in this parable than we are accustomed to recognize when we hear it. May it not help us to realize the opinion of infinite wisdom on the sumptuous banqueting, the unlimited junketings that we read of not infrequently, and in which perhaps we are glad, or would be if we could, to take part.

Excess to the injury of health is also sinful. Food and the desire for food are given us to sustain the body and prolong life. To use, or rather to abuse them to shorten it, is a perversion of the law of nature, a violation of the law of God. The observation is so common as to be trite, perhaps it was discovered even before the arts of cookery and medicine, that a great part of our ill-health is due to the abuse of food. Does it ever occur to you that the persistent gratification of your tastes by eating things that disagree with you is sinful? Holy Writ, especially in the books of the wise king of Israel, freely speaks of gluttony in terms rather too plain for modern polite listeners. The very fact is evidence that the Almighty Inspirer of these writings holds this vice to be degrading, unworthy of man, bestial.

Point II.

But if this be true, what can be said strong enough to present fairly the guilt of those who use intoxicating liquors to excess. The evils resultant from gluttony in food are slight when compared with the sad effects of intemperance in drink. When our total abstainers and temperance advocates are intemperant, as they undoubtedly sometimes are, in the denunciation of this bad habit, they confound the use with the abuse, and the abuse is so common and fraught with such direful consequences that their excess of zeal is certainly pardonable, if not justifiable. The ruined lives, the wretched homes, the fearful inheritance of vice,

the embezzlements, assaults, prostitutions, the terrible harvest of crimes that the drink-demon is constantly reaping, even in communities thought remarkable for temperance, even in the members of Christ's body, the Church, is something so appalling to thoughtful men as to seriously impede cool reasoning or speaking on the subject. The fact that so large a proportion of the inmates of our prisons, reformatories, hospitals, workhouses, and other abodes of vice or misery, are brought there either by their own or by another's intemperance; the fact that the evil appears to be steadily making new conquests in classes of society hitherto more or less immune from its influence; that women, women of religious practices, women of refinement and education, are, if we may believe the public prints, becoming very numerous victims to this habit—render it the more necessary that the teaching of God and His Church upon the subject should be more carefully heeded. Drink to the impairment of one's earthly goods, or one's health, drink to the loss, even the temporary loss, of one's reasoning powers, drink that is the cause of any other sin, is deeply sinful in itself.

It seems strange, and yet seems true, that there are many who do not think anything short of habitual drunkenness, of utter degradation, to be sinful. And yet every indulgence to the extent of drunkenness is undoubtedly sin. Even slighter indulgence, even a single glass may be seriously sinful for him who knows by sad experience that one glass may mean serious consequences for him. The devil is always "devlish sly." But he has invented excuses enough for intemperance in drink, to deceive, if possible, even the elect. Sociability, hospitality, a good time, even the feasts of the Church are made reasons for excess. As if Almighty God, or His saints could be honored, our neighbor benefited, congratulated, loved the better by making ourselves or others incapable of reason.

Point III.

The remedy for these excesses is the mortification of animal appetite. The grace of God is of the first importance. The means by which that grace is ordinarily obtained, prayer and the Sacraments, are indispensable. But these are of that class of devils that are best cast out by adding fasting to prayer. We

cannot lay too much stress upon the need of bringing the light of intellect and strength of will to bear upon the matter. But the difficulty is that this vice, when it once gets a firm hold, leaves very little either of light in the intellect or strength in the will. Who has not seen and pitied the wretched creature whose mind is so wrecked by intemperance that even when sober (if he can be said to be ever sober) he is a fit subject for a madhouse; whose will-power is so shattered that no consideration, however dear even to him, can withhold his hand and his lips from the destroying glass? These passions are mostly animal in their nature, and like animals must be trained by practice. Hence the necessity, apparent even to unaided reason, of training our bodies to submit their desires always to the control of reason. This is what St. Paul did. "I chastise my body and bring it into subjection." (1 Cor. 9: 27.) Our Lord recommended fasting both by His example and by His preaching of penance. The saints of God have practised it to a degree that may well be called heroic and marvellous, and with a unanimity which is a demonstration of its necessity. Holy Mother Church deems it of such importance that she lays upon us her solemn commands to fast and abstain at certain seasons of the year. Nor does the fact that owing to our weakness of body—she makes numerous exceptions to the letter of her law—invalidate her doctrine that mortification is indispensable. Her dispensation is a commutation rather than an abrogation of the law. She still cries out with her Divine Founder, "Unless you shall do penance, you shall all likewise perish." (Luke 13: 3.) She requires of those that cannot fast, that they substitute some other form of mortification. She made the law, but our fallen nature made the necessity of mortification.

He who fasts overcomes the rebellious desires of the flesh, and attains a peace of mind and a means of salvation whose value is inestimable. The intellect of the temperate man is clear and serviceable. Nothing conduces more to the "sound mind in a sound body" than the control of the animal passions which is gained by fasting. Thinkers of all kinds have recognized the fact, often grudgingly lest they should endorse the teachings of the Church.

The will too becomes stronger. Self-control in one respect promotes self-control in all. Fasting, in short, gives that cool

determination and calm, firm rule of the will which is needful in all temptation to enable us to avoid sin, to lead a life of virtue, needful in all the affairs of life.

It procures for us also an increase of divine grace, the necessary help to virtue and salvation. God is pleased with our act because it is a sacrifice made in His service, at once demonstrating the sincerity of our will to serve Him, and rendering us more capable of doing so. Therefore through His Prophets and Apostles He requires of us that we mortify our flesh, and assures us that for fasting in the proper manner "thy Father will repay thee." (Matt. 16: 18.)

CONCLUSION.

"Not by bread alone doth man live." The satisfaction of our bodily appetites is one of the lowest needs of our nature. By it we approach the beasts. To limit that need to its least necessary indulgence is to draw near to the angels and make oneself more fit for association with them. It is to leave ourselves more time and ability to seek the food of eternal life, the service of God. "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me." (John 4: 34.) It is to clear and purify the vision of the soul, making it more fit to see God. It is to nourish within us the life of grace, until it be merged in the life of glory.

ANOTHER PLAN.

DRUNKENNESS.

Text. . . . .—"Wine is a luxurious thing, and drunkenness a riotous: whosoever is delighted therewith shall not be wise. (Prov. 20: 1.)

Introduction.—The drunkard's life.

Point I. . . .—Effects of drunkenness.

Subdivision 1.—Loss of fortune.

Subdivision 2.—Ruin of morals.

Subdivision 3.—Loss of religion.

Point II. . .—Pretexts for drinking.

Subdivision 1.—Custom.

Subdivision 2.—Sociability.

Subdivision 3.—Need of drink.

Subdivision 4.—Diversion.

Conclusion. .—The drunkard's death.

REFERENCES,

Holy Scripture.—He that loveth good cheer shall be in want. —Prov. 21 : 17.

Look not upon the wine when it is yellow, when the color thereof shineth in the glass : it goeth in pleasantly. But in the end, it will bite like a snake, and will spread abroad poison like a basilisk.—Prov. 23 : 31, 32.

Wine is a luxurious thing, and drunkenness a riotous : whosoever is delighted therewith shall not be wise.—Prov. 20 : 1.

A drunken woman is a great wrath, and her reproach and shame shall not be hid.—Eccl. 26 : 11.

He that is temperate shall prolong life.—Eccl. 37 : 34.

Give not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin.—Eccl. 5 : 5.

Woe to you that rise up early it the morning to follow drunkenness, and to drink in the evening.—Is. 5 : 11.

Wine hath destroyed very many.—Eccl. 31 : 30.

Take heed to yourselves lest perhaps your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness and the cares of this life : and that day suddenly come upon you.—Luke 21 : 24.

Woe to you that are filled, for you shall hunger.—Luke 6 : 25.

Let us walk honestly, as in the day, not in rioting and drunkenness. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh in its concupiscences.—Rom. 13 : 13, 14.

Meat for the belly, and the belly for the meats : but God shall destroy both it and them.—1 Cor. 6 : 13.

Neither fornicators nor adulterers, nor drunkards shall possess the Kingdom of God.—1 Cor. 6 : 9, 10.

Many walk, of whom I have told you often (and now tell you weeping), that they are enemies of the Cross of Christ ; whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, whose glory is in their shame : who mind earthly things.—Phil. 3 : 18.

Be not drunk with wine, wherein is luxury.—Eph. 5 : 18.

Prayer is good with fasting and alms, more than to lay up treasures of gold.—Tob. 12 : 8.

Be converted to me with all your heart, in fasting and in weeping, and in mourning.—Joel 2 : 12.

Thou when thou fastest, anoint thy head and wash thy face, that thou appear not to men to fast, but to thy Father who is in secret : and thy Father who seeth in secret will repay thee.—Matt. 6 : 18.

Holy Fathers.—Listen to what drunkenness has done. It has deceived him whom the temptations of Sodom could not deceive. —Orig., *in Gen.*

Gluttony has killed many, frugality in eating none, wine has injured countless numbers, temperance no one.—St. Amb., *de Cain et Abel.*

Wine and youth is a double incentive to unlawful pleasure, why should we cast oil upon fire ?—St. Jer., *Ep. 22 ad Eustach.*

He who feeds his body on luxurious foods, nourishes evil desires.—St. Ephr., *Tr. de Tim. Dei.*

Fasting if regulated with discretion, puts down all rebellion of the flesh.—St. Cypr., *de Jejun.*

Fasting is the diet of the angels, he who practises it should be numbered amongst them.—St. Athan., *L. 2 de Virg.*

If you overcome this queen of vices, you will enjoy tranquillity and peace of mind. If she conquers you, your salvation will be endangered until the end of your life.—St. John, *Clim. Grad. 3.*

Fast because thou hast sinned, fast that thou mayest not sin, fast that thou mayest receive, fast that what thou hast received may endure.—St. John Chrys., *Serm. 2 de Jejun.*

LUST.—THE SLAVERY OF SIN.

Introduction.—He who commits sin is the servant of sin.
Point I. . . .—The wages of the nations.
Subdivision 1.—In sacred history.
Subdivision 2.—In profane history.
Point II. . .—The wages of the individual.
Subdivision 1.—Ruin of body.
Subdivision 2.—Ruin of intellect.
Subdivision 3.—Ruin of will.
Subdivision 4.—Eternal death.
Conclusion. .—Prayer for grace.

Text.—" The wages of sin is death."—Rom. 6 : 23.

Introduction.

" Whosoever commits sin is the servant of sin" (John 8 : 34), and " the wages of sin is death." This saying applies to sin in

all its many forms. From the beginning of the world sin and Satan have made wretched, helpless slaves of innumerable members of the human family, some for a short time and some for eternity. Bound in the chains of guilt, unable to move to work out their glorious destiny, blind and deaf to the true beauties of God's world and serving Him whose servants they have made themselves in a hundred degrading offices; bound perhaps in the bonds of evil habits, scarce able, except through wonders of divine grace, to make an attempt to regain their liberty; bound sometimes forever in the dungeon of hell, where all hope is left behind, where no order but eternal horror abides. Through sin death entered into the world, and the wretched servant of sin is destined not only to the natural death that is the common penalty of Adam's sin, but is bound to a body of death in a more fearful sense during life, and to receive a sentence of eternal death if he linger in that service until it is too late.

If this be true, as it undoubtedly is, of all sin, it is especially true of sins of lust. No sin among the long category which are the links that chain men to death, binds them more firmly, is more difficult to cast off by repentance. None becomes more strong as it is worn longer, none sinks the wretched body and soul more deep in degradation, none is a more probable cause of eternal death.

Point I.

No sin in the long record of man's crimes has left such a history of shame and sorrow, of degradation and disgrace, of rack and ruin, of death and probable damnation, as the sins of the flesh. Wars have been waged, nations been wiped from the face of the earth, schisms have arisen and heresies taken their origin in it. Treachery in its most revolting forms, even pestilence and other natural calamities have been the consequences of the indulgence of this passion.

Commentators hold, and Holy Writ seems to imply, that it was through the lustful loves of the sons of God with the daughters of men that "all flesh had corrupted its way" in the time of Noah. Wherefore God said: "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, from man even to the beasts, from the creeping thing even to the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them." The fearful punishment of

the deluge was therefore a mark of God's resentment against lust. (Gen. 6.)

The lascivious conduct common among the men of Sodom and Gomorrha was the cause of the visitation of God's wrath in a rain of fire and brimstone, which has left the very sites of those cities undistinguishable even to the searching eye of modern research. (Gen. 19.)

The unnatural lust of the men of Gabaa, of the tribe of Benjamin, caused a war in which all the men of that tribe were slain. (Judg. 20). The sons of Juda were struck dead (Gen. 9), Joseph was cast into prison (Gen. 39), Samson was betrayed to his enemies (Judg. 16), Ammon, the son of David, was killed (2 Kings 13), and all in consequence of unbridled lust. David himself became guilty of adultery and murder and brought pestilence upon a whole people, and all through an immodest glance. Solomon departed from the service of God and prepared the way for the division of his people, when he loved strange women. (3 Kings 11.)

Profane history teaches the same lesson. The sinful desires of Paris brought about the Trojan war and the destruction of "proud Ilium." Those of Cleopatra set the Roman world of her day in arms. The mistresses of French kings kept Europe in a deluge of blood for many years. It is a familiar saying that heresy and schism usually end like comedies in a marriage, and it might be added in the marriage of someone, prince or priest, who had no right to marry. Instances in point are well known. Woes incalculable have afflicted the human family either in the natural course of events or as the avenging act of the Almighty upon this vice.

Point II.

The injury it works to individuals is not less fearfully striking; injury to body and soul, to intellect and will, and worst of all, eternal death. The unclean spirit when, through the habit of this sin, he is permitted to return again and again to the soul, brings with him many other spirits more wicked than himself and, entering in, they dwell there. They take possession, forcible and complete, of the temple of the Holy Ghost which has been given up to them by its unfaithful guardian. The poets have imagined, and ruder ages may perhaps have seen, torture

by binding the body of the culprit to a decomposing corpse. No torment could be more horrible. And no figure could be more apt to represent the soul which is chained for life and for eternity to a body consumed with the fires of lust, corrupt with the rottenness of this most degrading of vices.

The body does not escape punishment even in this world. Physicians know, hospitals could testify, our very newspapers bear daily witness to the misery, the desperation of the victims of its horrors. So revolting are the details of this retribution, that while the contemplation of this living death may be salutary even as the meditations of holy Job as he sat upon his dunghill and thought upon death, to speak of them at length would be unbecoming. Let us not, however, neglect to make for ourselves a covenant as holy Job did, not to yield the slightest way to these temptations.

The mind also is enchained and the glorious power of thought, by which man is distinguished from the beasts, becomes enfeebled, bestialized. Bound to a body of death it can scarcely be said to reason, but is guided like the beasts by the lowest instincts. It becomes blinded to the teachings of faith. The holy Fathers, accurate observers of all things in the spiritual life of man, unanimously attest that loss of faith is the usual result of this vice. The intellect becomes incapable of fulfilling any of its duties properly. Its products (witness some modern erotic writers) are more like the wailings of the unclean spirit within them than the coherent utterances of a self-respecting, thinking being. At last it sinks altogether under the weight of its servitude, madness ensues, such madness as might not unreasonably be supposed to be obsession by an impure spirit, and the intellect is, to all intents, dead.

The will, too, becomes enfeebled. It loses all relish for what is good. Modesty, purity, justice, charity, hope, faith itself, are crushed out by the python folds of the master of the sinner. The will becomes no longer able to resist temptation. It is allured instead of repelled, as it should be, by all that is corrupt, sinful, and death-dealing. The eyes of the old serpent fascinate it, and in becoming his willing slave it embraces its death.

And then comes the parting of soul and body. When the body is debilitated and the powers of the soul reduced to their lowest, dissolution cannot be far off. And oh, the terrors of the

death-bed—if, indeed, he be allowed a bed to die upon—of the victim of lust. Of all the vices, there is none which produces more or greater varieties of despair. From the hard, dull unconsciousness of danger, which seems to court rather than fear the eternal abode with sin, suffering and Satan, to the raving terror of him who knows and dreads his fate, without hope of escaping it.

And after death—judgment; and then eternal death, the wages of sin. Death unending, death to God, death to all happiness, death living like the vulture of Prometheus upon the sinner's misery. A dead soul chained to a body of death, confined with all the horrors of entombment with hundreds of other corpses.

Conclusion.

O, may He who rose from the dead deliver us from the body of this death. May Mary Immaculate, and John the Pure, may all the holy choir of virgins, and that bright band who follow the Lamb wheresoever He goeth, intercede for us and keep us from this death. May they obtain for us from the Most Pure the strength to resist temptation; to suffer, as the holy martyrs Agatha, Agnes, and Lucy suffered, rather than yield to the tempter; to resist by violence, even to blood, as many holy monks and hermits resisted, rather than yield even in thought. May Magdalen, Augustine, and all the holy penitents who have felt the sting of the flesh, and, having yielded, gained grace to rise against their tyrant, and casting off their bonds, found safety in the wounds of Christ, obtain of Him for those who have unhappily fallen into this slavery the rending of the chains of the captive, and restoration from that service whose wage is death to the liberty of the children of God.

ANOTHER PLAN.

TRAITS AND PUNISHMENT OF LUST.

Text. . . . .—"Thou shalt not commit adultery."—Ex. 15: 14.
Introduction,—Meaning of the commandment.
Point I. . . .—A shameful sin.
Subdivision 1.—According to reason.
Subdivision 2.—According to faith.

Point II. . .—A cruel sin.
Joseph-David,—its daily cruelties and wrongs.
Point III. . .—Its punishment.
Subdivision 1.—In its effects.
Subdivision 2.—By God.
Conclusion. .—"Many sins are forgiven her because she has loved ΩΩΩmuch."—Luke 7: 47.

REFERENCES.

Holy Scripture.—Thou shalt not commit adultery.—Ex. 20: 14.

I have made a covenant with my eyes, that I would not so much as think upon a virgin.—Job 31 : 1.

The memory of the just is with praises, and the name of the wicked shall rot.—Prov. 10 : 7.

Clemency prepareth life: and the pursuing of evil things death.—Prov. 11 : 19.

In the path of justice is life, but the byway leadeth to death. —Prov. 12 : 28.

The wicked shall be destroyed from the earth.—Prov. 2 : 22.

The seed of the wicked shall perish.—Ps. 36 : 28.

As for him that is pure, his work is right.—Prov. 21 : 8.

Wine and women make wise men fall off, and shall rebuke the prudent,—Eccl. 19 : 2.

Rottenness and worms shall inherit him, and he shall be lifted up for a greater example, and his soul shall be taken away out of the number.—Eccl. 19 : 3.

Be ashamed of fornication before father and mother.—Eccl. 41 : 21.

Be not over-much wicked, and be not foolish, lest thou die before thy time.—Eccl. 7 : 18.

As by one man sin entered into the world, and by sin death: and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned.— Rom. 5 : 12.

What fruit had ye then in those things of which you are now ashamed? for the end of them is death.—Rom. 6 : 21.

The body is not for fornication but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.—1 Cor. 6 : 13.

Do not err. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers,

. . . nor the effeminate, nor liers with mankind . . . shall possess the kingdom of God.—1 Cor. 6 : 9, 10.

Lest the greatness of the revelations should lift me up, there was given me a sting of my flesh, an angel of Satan to buffet me. —2 Cor. 12 : 7.

Fornicators and adulterers God will judge.—Heb. 13 : 4.

Holy Fathers.—Modesty, the flower of manners, the honor of our bodies, the grace of the sexes, the integrity of the blood, the guarantee of our race, the basis of sanctity, the pre-indication of every good disposition.—Tertull., *de Pudic., C. 1.*

Impurity is akin to idolatry.—Tertull., *de Pudic.*

Impurity is the motherof impenitence.—St. Cypr., *de Discip.*

Lust is a cruel and ravenous mistress, torturing the mind enslaved by her as with spurs.—St. Greg. Nyss., *de Vit. Moys.*

When a man begins to yield to lust, he begins to fall away from the true faith.—St. Remig., *de Helia et Jejun.*

He who lives in lust is dead.—St. Jer., *in Ep.*

Fornication and voluptuousness pervert the mind, and make a brute out of a reasoning animal.—St. Jer., *in Osaeam, C. 4.*

Lust makes homicides.—St. J. Chrys., *Hom. 4 in Matt.*

Of lust are begotten, blindness of intellect, inconsiderateness, inconstancy, precipitancy, love of self, hatred of God, affection for this world, fear and even despair of the world to come.—St. Greg., *in Moral.*

When any impure thought assails me, I take refuge in the wounds of Christ.—St. Aug., *in Enchir., C. 22.*

There is no vice which does so much to subject the world to the devil; it rejoices hell, and draws the whole world toward eternal punishment.—St. Bern., *Serm. 21 de Lux.*

What an iniquity and what lamentable perversity, that the lustful man should sell to the devil a soul redeemed by the blood of Christ.—St. Aug., *Serm. 250 de Temp.*

ANGER.—THE MEEKNESS OF CHRIST.

Introduction.—Christ's entry into Jerusalem.

Point I. . . .—His example of meekness.

Subdivision 1.—His patience in suffering.

Subdivision 2.—His meekness under insult.

Subdivision 3.—His forgiveness of injuries.

Point II, . .—His teaching of meekness.
Subdivision 1.—Learn of me for I am meek.
Subdivision 2.—Do good to them that hate you.
Subdivision 3.—Until seventy times seven times.
Point III. . .—Transition—Righteous anger.
Subdivision 1.—Anger overrides reason.
Subdivision 2.—Begets many sins.
Conclusion. .—Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord.

Text.—"Tell ye the daughter of Sion: Behold thy king cometh to thee meek."—Matt. 21: 5.

INTRODUCTION.

There was commotion in the city of Jerusalem. The crowds hurrying through the streets made for the gate of the old sheep-market that led toward the Mount of Olives. As they drew near to the wall, across the brook of Cedron came the sound of many joyous voices and the burden of their cry arose: "Hosanna, blessed is He who cometh in the name of the Lord; Blessed be the kingdom of our father David that cometh: Hosanna in the highest." (Mark 11: 10.) From the gate the procession might be seen descending the opposite slope of the hill, a crowd of people, without order but full of enthusiasm, carrying branches of the triumphal palm in their hands, and strewing their garments in the way; a dozen of earnest-faced men undistinguished by extraordinary intelligence or dignity of bearing, and yet men who were to convince the world, and at their head a Man riding upon an ass. He was the centre of this tumult of honor and gratulation. No king of this world was He, drawn in regal state of gilded chariots and high-bred steeds; no warrior clothed with the iron and blood-stained panoply of conquest; He had none whatever of the marks by which the world usually distinguishes its heroes. Only a Man whose form and face and carriage bespoke Him one whose mildness of spirit would not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax. (Is. 42: 3.) Nevertheless, He was the King of Israel, the King who was to rule the earth, the King of Glory, the King of whom the prophet said: "Tell ye the daughter of Sion, behold thy king cometh to thee meek and sitting upon an ass."

Christ is our model in all things. True we cannot hope to

attain to divine perfection, nor to the blamelessness and sublime virtue of His humanity, but they point out the goal toward which we should strive with all our strength. "Be ye perfect, as also your heavenly Father is perfect." (Matt. 5 : 48.)

POINT I.

Consider then the meekness of Christ as He showed it in His life, not merely for justice sake, but for our instruction.

Consider His patience under suffering. Throughout His life he was subject to poverty and all its attendant evils. "He had not whereon to lay His head." (Luke 9 : 58.) His bodily sufferings during the passion were such as no other man has ever borne. Yet His patience at their very height is expressed in His prayer in the garden : "not as I will, but as thou wilt." (Matt. 26 : 39.)

He bore insults without resentment. His fellow townsmen of Nazareth spoke of Him scornfully : "How came this man by His wisdom and miracles ? Is not this the carpenter's son ? And they were scandalized in His regard." (Matt. 13 : 54, ss.) Yet He never scorned, never threatened in return. When His messengers came to Samaria to prepare for Him, the people of the place repulsed Him because of His Jewish nationality. "Wilt thou," His disciples asked, "that we command fire to come down from heaven and consume them ?" But that Divine meekness knew not the spirit of revenge. "You know not of what spirit you are." (Luke 9 : 55.) The servants of the house of Caiaphas insulted Him, the false witnesses belied Him, the high-priest himself condemned Him unjustly, yet "Jesus held His peace." (Matt. 26 : 63.)

Bodily injury could not rouse Him to anger. The inhabitants of Nazareth "rose up and thrust Him out of their city ; and they brought Him to the brow of the hill whereon their city was built that they might cast Him down headlong." Still he called not on the avenging fires of heaven, nor was He stirred by the fires of wrath. "He, passing through the midst of them, went His way." (Luke 4 : 29, 30.) The Jews in the temple accused Him of blasphemy and "took up stones to cast at Him : but Jesus hid Himself and went out of the temple." (John 8 : 59.) Judas betrayed Him with a kiss, and with lips still warm with the traitor's salutation, Christ calls him "friend." Nay more, He

is scourged, crowned with thorns and nailed to the cross. Now surely the avenging bolt will fall, for nature herself cries out against the outrage to nature's God. Yet He not only forgives but prays for His executioners, and excuses them. "Father forgive them: they know not what they do." (Luke 23: 34.)

Point II.

This example He commended to us, "Learn of me, for I am meek and humble of heart." (Matt. 11: 29.) Learn to endure with patience all the calamities of life that fall to your share. Learn to be content with your lot. Know your own unworthiness, know the greatness of your indebtedness to the Divine Mercy, and accept as holy Job did, good and evil indifferently from His hand.

Those who hate, who revile or persecute you, are not to be opposed with all the power at the command of your wrath. After the example of Christ, who "when He was reviled, reviled not again" (1 Peter 2: 23), according to the precept He has laid upon us, "Do good to them that hate you" (Matt. 5: 44), learn to bear the insults, the ill-wishes, the injurious words, the calumnies—in a word, the hatred of men—without endeavoring, without even wishing, to return evil for evil.

No act of mildness is impossible to him who strives to bear the cross. Here is Christ's rule of conduct: "I say to you not to resist evil; but if one strike thee on the right cheek, turn to him also the other" (Matt. 5: 39). "An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," the stern rule of the Old Law, is not permitted to a Christian. He must be prepared to overcome evil with good, by giving place to wrath. More, we are required to forgive as Christ forgave, under pain that we ourselves be denied the forgiveness of God, under pain of God's wrath. "So shall my heavenly Father do to you, if you forgive not every one his brother from your hearts" (Matt. 11: 29).

We are required to forgive not only once, but, as God forgives us, until seventy times seven times. O, the long-suffering of the Almighty, and the puerile dignity of the creature who, even if he succeeds in forgiving his enemy once because of the Lord's example and command, finds the difficulty insuperable when his honor is offended by a relapse! How would we fare were God to apply the same rule to us?

Point III.

Therefore "let every man be slow to anger, for the anger of men worketh not the justice of God" (James 1 : 19, 20). There is indeed an anger which is not at variance with God's justice.

That natural impulse to repel what is hurtful, even with violence, is an instinct given us for the preservation of our lives. That anger which is aroused for God's honor, the defence of ourselves and of our neighbors, and which, being aroused, is kept within the bounds of reason, is not sinful. Such was the indignation that armed our Lord with a scourge of cords to drive the money-changers from His Father's house (John 2 : 13 ss.), such the anger of Moses (Ex. 11 : 9, 32 : 19), of Phinees (Num. 25), of Samuel (1 Kings 15 : 33).

But that excess of anger which, roused by pride or envy, and ungoverned by reason, is carried out in hatred and revenge, is of the devil. It is begotten of pride. For it almost necessarily arises out of an unduly high conception of our own worth. He who thinks justly of himself, who knows his own sinfulness, weakness and folly, is not likely to be easily moved to unrighteous anger. Once born and freed from restraint it soon overwhelms the reason. That anger is a sort of short madness, is one of man's earliest observations in the study of himself. He who gives way to it becomes quickly unreasonable, foolish and finally mad.

In each and all of the stages anger is the parent of many sins, and wrongs to others. The quarrels which dissever friends and disrupt homes, the hatred which turns even good-will to evil, which paints with its fiery hue all things however mild and harmless that come within the radius of its glare, revenge revelling in evil like Satan and culminating in murder, these are but some of the children of anger.

Conclusion.

But "vengeance belongeth to me" (Heb. 10 : 30), saith the Lord ; to God alone, either in Himself or by delegated authority, it belongs to punish. The punishment with which our wrath visits those who offend or injure us, is revenge, unjust and sinful. "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant ?

To his own lord let him stand or fall." (Rom. 14 : 4.) Remember that Christ's example, though He could rightfully punish, always taught mildness. "I would not the death of the sinner." "I came not to call the just, but sinners." Consider that His teaching requires us to study and learn meekness of Him. Without its practice we cannot hope to qualify ourselves for a share in the triumph of the King who comes to us, meek and lowly of heart.

ANOTHER PLAN.

ANGER AND MEEKNESS.

Text. . . . .—"Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land." Matt. 5 : 4.

Introduction.—The Sermon on the Mount.

Point I. . . .—Effects of anger.

Subdivision 1.—It deprives us of reason.

Subdivision 2.—Of the friendship of God.

Subdivision 3.—Of the friendship of men.

Point II. . .—Advantages of meekness.

Subdivision 1.—It secures tranquillity and true self-respect.

Subdivision 2.—It gains friends, and overcomes enemies.

Subdivision 3.—It pleases God, and gains heaven.

Conclusion. .—"O Lord, rebuke me not in Thy indignation."—Ps. 6 : 1.

REFERENCES.

Holy Scripture.—He will exalt the meek.—Ps. 149 : 4.

Be angry and sin not.—Ps. 4 : 5.

A mild answer breaketh wrath : but a harsh word stirreth up fury.—Prov. 15 : 1.

A spirit that is easily angered, who can bear ?—Prov. 18 : 14.

He that is impatient exalteth his folly.—Prov. 14 : 29.

A stone is heavy and sand weighty ; but the anger of a fool is heavier than them both. Anger hath no mercy, nor fury when it breaketh forth.—Prov. 27 : 3, 4.

Be not as a lion in thy house, terrifying them of thy household, and oppressing them that are under thee.—Eccl. 4 : 35.

Remember the fear of God and be not angry with thy neighbor.—Eccl. 28 : 8, 9.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land.—Matt. 5 : 4.

Whosoever is angry with his brother shall be in danger of the judgment.—Matt. 5 : 22.

Learn of Me, for I am meek and humble of heart, and you shall find rest for your souls.—Matt. 11 : 29.

When they shall persecute you in this city, flee into another. —Matt. 10 : 23.

Peace, be still (to the tempest).—Mark 4 : 39.

Now I, Paul, myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ.—2 Cor. 10 : 1.

Be angry and sin not. Let not the sun go down upon your anger.—Eph. 4 : 26.

The servant of the Lord must not wrangle : but be mild toward all men, apt to teach, patient.

Let every man be slow to speak and slow to anger. For the anger of men worketh not the justice of God.—James 1 : 19, 29.

Enmities, contentions, emulations, wraths, quarrels, dissensions, sects, envies, murders, . . . they who do such things shall not obtain the kingdom of God.—Gal. 5 : 20, 21.

Holy Fathers.—Do not, my brethren, attempt to cure evil by evil, nor strive to overcome one another in injuries. For in such a strife he who conquers is the inferior, and leaves the contest loaded more grievously with sins.—St. Basil, *in Hom. de Ira.*

It is better to live with a wild beast than with a passionate man; for the former when once tamed remains so, but the latter as often as he is pacified breaks out again.—St. Chrys., *Hom. 29, ad Pop.*

You will overcome a bad man better by silence and giving way than by answering him, because malice is not enlightened but excited by words.—St. Chrys., *Hom. 38, in Matt.*

If you cannot avoid anger, moderate it; if you cannot escape passion, restrain it.—St. Isid., *L. 1 de Silil.*

It is great virtue if you do not injure those who injure you, great fortitude if you forgive injuries, and great glory if you spare those upon whom you might take revenge.—St. Isid., *in Silil.*

He is a blessed and most happy man who is meek.—St. Ephr., *de Vit. et Virt.*

Is the meek man wounded by insults? He overcomes by not

returning insult for insult. Is he afflicted with persecutions? He will bear them. Is he attacked by calumnies? He will pray. Is he smitten on the right cheek? He turns the other, and would turn a third if he had it.—St. Greg. Naz., *Orat. C. Max.*

To get angry is human, to restrain anger is Christian.—Salvian, *Ep. 9.*

Let us avoid anger, for it stifles reason, knows nothing of just moderation, easily destroys peace of mind, tramples upon wisdom, makes the wise foolish, and ruins the dignity of a pastor.—St. Aug., *Serm. ad Frat.*

We may learn how great is the sin of anger by this, that when meekness is lost, the likeness of the divine image disappears.—St. Greg., *L. 2 de Moral.*

THE TRAGEDY OF SIN.

PARAPHRASE OF THE STORY OF THE PASSION.

Prologue.—The Passion the centre of all history.
—Its motif is sin.

I. . . .—Gethsemani.
(1) The agony; (2) the betrayal; (3) the flight of the Apostles; (4) the arrest.

II. . .—The trial.
(1) Before Caiaphas; (2) before Pilate; (3) His Blood be upon us.

III. . .—The torture.
(1) The crowning with thorns; (2) the scourging; (3) the mockery.

IV. . .—The way of the cross.
(1) The three falls; (2) the daughters of Jerusalem.

V. . .—The crucifixion.
(1) The crowd; (2) the motif; (3) "it is consummated."

Epilogue.—Will you repeat the tragedy?

NOTE.—Brevity must rule in this sketch, though it may be disregarded in the sermon. The story of the Passion can be followed best in some harmony of the Gospels, *e. g.*, that in Coleridge's *Life of our Lord.* Let the idea that sin was the reason of Christ's sufferings form the link to join the incidents related.

Text.—"A faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation: that Christ Jesus came into this world to save sinners."—1 Tim. 1: 15.

PROLOGUE.

All the world enacts a drama; the saying was hackneyed in ancient times. Yet it still contains undeveloped and unfamiliar truths. It may be moralized into a thousand similes. The plot of the world-drama is the end attainment of the end of creation. Sin is the only obstacle that can prevent the accomplishment of that end. The tragedy wherein sin was conquered and our right to heaven restored, is the most important part of the drama of humanity. The tragedy was enacted one Good Friday many years ago on Mount Calvary.

"A faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into this world to save sinners." His every act from the moment when He became man until His return to the right hand of His Father demonstrates this constant, deliberate purpose. He went about doing good, teaching by word and example, holding out in His every deed hope to the sinner; "I am not come to call the just, but sinners" (Matt. 9: 13). Yet though the all-pervading note of His life was love, He did not fail to rebuke, where necessary, with paternal charity and firmness. Scribe and Pharisee and priest had felt His reproach even as the money-changers in the temple had fled before His scourge of cords. These, the very types of that stiff-necked people whom the prophets of old strove to correct, becoming angered instead of repentant, sought His life, and persuaded the fickle populace, who one day had sought to make Him king, and the next to stone Him, who only a few days before had greeted Him with hosannas, to join them in their revengeful purpose. For some time previous to the events of to-day, Christ had avoided His enemies, because His time was not yet come. Now, however, He told His Apostles, "Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and the Son of man shall be betrayed to the chief priests, and to the scribes, and the ancients, and they shall condemn Him to death and shall deliver Him to the gentiles; and they shall mock Him and spit upon Him and kill Him." (Mark 10: 31.) Note the deliberate purpose, willing even minor details, to endure all the trials that were awaiting Him,—that the prophets might be fulfilled,—mean-

ing of course those prophets who foretold the tragedy of the Lamb who taketh away the sins of the world. That purpose and its accomplishment is the subject of the tragedy presented before us to-day. That tragedy as told by the four Evangelists is the subject of our story. May we look upon it with love and with profit. May we follow Christ's footsteps along the sorrowful way of the cross, and learn the lessons, numerous as the drops of His Blood, that are strewn along it. Learn the lessons of faith, of hope and of love that cluster about the cross; learn something of the depth of the Divine Love for men; learn at least what sin is, by recalling at every step of the journey that our sin was the cause of every pang the Redeemer suffered.

I.—Gethsemani.

Having eaten the Paschal supper, and fulfilled His promise so full of hope for men, by giving us the Blessed Eucharist, He is ready and gives the signal for the conflict by saying to the traitor, "What thou doest, do quickly." And Judas went forth to prepare his part in the tragedy by bargaining with the chief priests. Meanwhile the Son of man went forth from the city, across the brook of Cedron, into the garden called Gethsemani, and there gave the resolution of His soul to be buffeted by the weakness of His humanity. Alone in the night, He thought of all that was impending, and felt by anticipation all that He was to suffer. Every pain was so vividly present to His mind that each tingling nerve seemed to bear its load of pain to the overburdened brain at that moment. And greatest affliction of all, He saw the waste of His Blood, the frustration of His purpose by the loss of the thousands of sinners, who would crucify Him again by their offences, use the will He would not coerce to mock His sufferings, and would go unrepentant to their place. The thought was too much for human strength. The sweat rushed from every pore of His body and became as drops of blood trickling down upon the ground. Prostrate upon the earth the cry of agony was wrested from Him: "O my Father, if it be possible, let this chalice pass from Me." Three times came the prayer, and still His purpose held: "Not as I will, but as Thou wilt."

But the silence of the garden was already broken by the tramp of many feet. The darkness of the night began to glow with the lurid glare of many torches, and from the gloom came forth the

recreant Apostle at the head of a multitude armed with swords and clubs. "Hail, Rabbi," and the traitor kissed Him. No blow of the scourging, no stroke of the hammer upon the nails, was so rude and painful as that struck by one "who had eaten sweet food with Him." Yet no word of complaint, only the moving hint, "Friend, whereto art thou come?" The mob advanced to lay hands on Him, but at His question, "Whom seek ye?" they went backward and fell to the ground. His purpose held. Peter, forgetful of the legions of angels prompt for His defence, drew the sword. But still His determination was unchanged: "Put up thy sword into the scabbard." As they bind and hurry Him through the garden, amid flaring torches and glinting weapons, amidst fierce faces inflamed with vile passions, there appears one face so calm, so unmoved, so majestic, that to any disciple who might have thought of a rescue in that fearful hour must have been clear that He wanted no assistance, that He was going to death as a king to his triumph.

II.—The Trial.

On through the gloomy garden, across the stones, and through the deeper darkness of the ravine of the Cedron, and through the streets of the sleeping city, they hurry Him to the house of Annas and Caiaphas. And there, mocked and spit upon, struck by a servant, and defamed by false witnesses, forsaken by His friends and denied by His apostle, He held His peace; and held His purpose, too, unshaken. Only in answer to the solemn though hypocritical appeal, "I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us if thou be the Christ the Son of God," did He open His lips to answer: "Thou hast said it. Nevertheless I say to you, hereafter you shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of the power of God, and coming in the clouds of heaven." The Son of God, the Creator, the Redeemer, the Judge of the world, condemned by a corrupt judge. Why? To save sinners from His judgment.

Thence, after a night of outrages, He is carried before Pilate to be condemned to death. The Roman Governor was a coward. He "found no cause" to punish and had recourse to subterfuges to save his prisoner. And every trick was a new wrong upon the Victim of our sins. "Whom will you that I release to you, Barabbas, or Jesus who is called Christ?" And they answered.

"Away with this man and release unto us Barabbas." Truly not only has He borne our transgressions, and been reckoned among the wicked, as Isaias (ch. 53) foretold of Him, but a murderer is preferred before Him. "What then shall I do to the King of the Jews?" But they cried out saying, "Crucify him, crucify him." "But I," said Pilate, "find no cause in him, I am innocent of the blood of this just man; look you to it." They answered—alas for humanity—"His Blood be upon us and upon our children." O that His Blood may be upon us, not in vengeance for what our sins have wrought upon Him, but in pardon, in mercy, and in grace.

III.—The Torture.

Pilate found no cause in Him. "I will chastise him therefore and let him go." He is scourged until His flesh is torn and His body covered with wounds, crowned with thorns that are pressed home until they pierce to the throbbing brain, wrapt in a red cloak with a reed in His hand, and saluted in mockery as the King of the Jews. "Hail, King of the Jews"; hail, King of all men in the "diadem wherewith His Mother has crowned Him."

Then before the vengeful multitude He is shown again: "Behold the man." Aye, behold the man—God tortured for sinners! "From the sole of the foot to the top of the head there is no soundness therein" (Is. 1 : 6).

IV.—The Way of the Cross.

The final doom is spoken, "Take him you, and crucify him," and so out once more into the street, now filled with howling enemies, bearing the heavy weight of the cross. Thrice, faint with loss of blood, He fell to the stones, to save us from falling. Up again and on, urged by the blows and curses, urged by the sins of men, through the city gates. Few show compassion on Him, and them He bids: "Weep not over Me, but weep for yourselves and your children;—not for My sufferings, but for the sins that have caused them." Still onward along the sorrowful way, strong in His purpose, strong in His love for sinners, until Golgotha appears.

V.—The Crucifixion.

And there the procession spreads out over the hill, and the spectators seek favorable places to view the last act of the tragedy. At the foot of the mount stood the stolid Roman cohort. To them Rome alone was power, glory and the fate of mankind, and the spectacle before them but an unimportant incident in the duties of a wearisome post. On all sides Jews of every country, rank and age thirsting, they scarce could tell why, for the blood of the Victim, but all unconscious of the meaning of what they saw, ignorant that this was the fulfilment of the prophets, the sanction of the law. On the summit of the hill, the priests, triumphant in their hour of vengeance, yet blind to the fact that their victim was a self-immolated offering for their sins. On the other side, the faithful few: Mary, the Immaculate Mother of the Lord, Magdalen, the penitent, and John, the loving and beloved disciple, types they alone among the crowd, of the faithful who love and embrace the cross. In the midst, the Victim of propitiation in the hands of His executioners. Loud rings the sound of the hammer driving the nails through those sacred hands; louder yet the execrations that resound as the cross is raised aloft. Nature is moved; the sun is darkened; the earth trembles; the dead arise; the onlookers are mystified; even the Roman centurion dimly perceives the truth that the Lord of nature is rendering up His human life for some purpose of His own. The voice from the cross proclaims the secret of it all: "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." For His executioners, for those who drove the nails, whether with hammer, or with the cry "crucify him," aye, for all sinners from Adam to the end of time, goes forth the cry, "Father, forgive them." This is the great purpose of the tragedy, "Father. forgive them," by the agony of Gethsemani, by the insults of Caiaphas and Pilate, by the tortures of the body, and the blood that bedewed the dust of the way of the cross, by this sacrifice and death, "Father, forgive them."

At last it is consummated; human strength can endure no longer: "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit;" and bowing His head He gave up the ghost. It is consummated, the greatest event in the world's history, the greatest suffering man ever endured, the greatest act of love man ever performed,

the most perfect sacrifice is consummated, and it is the tragedy of sin.

EPILOGUE.

The tragedy was over, but it is renewed again in a bloodless, painless manner in the daily Mass. It is finished, yet it is renewed again whenever sin is committed. Behold the Man whom sin has crucified! Behold the King who being exalted from the earth, wishes to draw all things to Himself. The sequel rests with you. Will you by sin renew all the suffering, and anguish and the bloodshed of the tragedy, or will you by embracing the cross follow Him who died upon it to eternal life? Oh, by every step of that weary journey from the supper-room to Golgotha, by every drop of Blood shed for you, by every pang of suffering endured for you, by Christ's infinite love, by His death on the cross, let not that sacrifice be offered for you in vain. Accept the love He offers; wash your souls in the Blood of Calvary, and seek in the way of the cross the way of salvation.

REFERENCES.

Holy Scripture.—They have dug my hands and my feet, they have numbered all my bones.—Ps. 21 : 17, 18.

I looked for one that would grieve together with me, but there was none: and for one that would comfort me and I found none. —Ps. 68 : 21.

A fainting hath taken hold of me because of the wicked that forsake thy law.—Ps. 118 : 53.

I am a worm and no man, the reproach of men and the outcast of the people.—Ps. 12 : 7.

There is no beauty in him, nor comeliness.—Is. 53 : 2.

Despised and the most abject of men; a Man of sorrows and acquainted with infirmity.—*Ibid.* 3.

Surely He hath borne our infirmities, and carried our sorrows. —*Ibid.* 4.

He was wounded for our iniquities; He was bruised for our sins: the chastisement of His peace was upon us, and by His bruises we are healed.—*Ibid.* 5.

The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.—*Ibid.* 6.

He was offered because it was His own will . . . he shall be led as a sheep to the slaughter, and shall be dumb as a lamb before his shearer.—*Ibid.* 7.

For the wickedness of my people, have I struck Him.—*Ibid.* 8.

Even thy brethren and the house of thy father, even they have fought against thee.—Jer. 12 : 6.

O all ye that pass by the way, attend and see, if there be sorrow like unto my sorrow.—Lam. 1 : 12.

All they that passed by the way have clapped their hands at thee, they have hissed and wagged their heads.—Lam. 2 : 15.

He hath broken me in pieces. He hath made me desolate.—Lam. 3 : 11.

The wickedness of the wicked shall be upon Him.—Ezech. 18 : 20.

Behold we go up to Jerusalem and the Son of man shall be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes and the ancients, and they shall condemn Him to death and shall deliver Him to the gentiles : And they shall mock Him, and spit upon Him, and scourge Him, and kill Him.—Mark 10 : 33.

I, if I be lifted from the earth, will draw all things to Myself.—John 12 : 32.

For there is one God, and one mediator of God and men, the man Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for the redemption of all. —1 Tim. 2 : 5, 6.

Being consummated He became to all that obey Him, the cause of eternal salvation.—Heb. 5 : 9.

Holy Fathers.—He hath mourned for me, who had nothing in Himself over which to mourn.—St. Cyril. Hier., *L. II, in Joan*

The Blood of Christ was the cause of our life.—St. John Chris., *Hom. 7, in Matt.*

The Cross of Christ is the key of Paradise.—St. John Dam., *L. 3.*

Why should we use words? His wounds speak more eloquently.—St. Ambr., *L. de Jac. et Vita Beata.*

His chains have made us free; the crown of thorns has gained for us heavenly diadems; His wounds have healed us.—St. Hier., *C. 14, Marc.*

Christ was perturbed (in the garden) because He chose to be so.—St. Aug., *in Joan.*

A great spectacle. In the eyes of the impious, a great reproach; in those of the pious, a great mystery.—St. Aug., *Tr. 119, in Joan.*

Christ seems to have wept not only with His eyes, but with all His members.—St. Bern., *Serm. 3, in Dom. Palm.*

The Passion of Christ, the work which effected our redemption, should attract the whole of our affection.—St. Bern., *Serm. 20, in Can.*

Behold the open gate of Paradise, the sword that closed its entrance was turned by the lance of the soldier.—St. Bonav.

The slightest drop of Christ's Blood would have sufficed for the redemption of the human race; but He gave it all, that we might perceive the strength of His love in the excess of His benefits.—St. Bonav., *Serm. 6, in Paradis.*

The door which was in the side of the ark (of Noah) is the wound with which the lance opened the side of Christ; by this door all who come to Him enter, for the Sacraments by which believers are received into the Church flow therefrom.—St. Aug., *L. 15 de Civ. Dei, C. 26.*

FIGURES OF CHRIST IN HIS PASSION.

Abel, slain by his brother. "You are come . . . to the sprinkling of blood which speaketh better than that of Abel."—Heb. 12: 24.

The Ark of Noah, which saved the human race.—Gen. 7 and 8.

Isaac, offered in sacrifice by his father.—Gen. 22: 2.

Joseph, sold for twenty pieces of silver.—Gen. 37: 28.

The Paschal Lamb.—Exod. 12: 5.

The Emissary Goat, carrying away the sins of the people.—Lev. 16: 10.

The Brazen Serpent, raised in the desert, that they who looked upon it might be saved from the bite of the serpents.—Num. 21: 8, 9; John 3: 14.

AN UNWORTHY COMMUNION.

Introduction.—Christ washes the feet of His disciples.

Point I. . . .—The crime of sacrilege.

Subdivision 1.—The crime of Judas.

Subdivision 2.—The crime of the bad communicant is like his.

Point II. . .—The punishment of sacrilege.

Subdivision 1.—In this world.

Subdivision 2.—In the next.

Conclusion. .—Prove thyself.

1. By careful examination.
2. By sorrowful confession.
3. By putting away sinful desire.

Text.—"He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself."—1 Cor. 11: 28.

INTRODUCTION.

The great festival day was at hand, and "Jesus knowing that His hour was come that He should pass out of this world unto the Father; having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them unto the end" (John 13: 1). Therefore having assembled His Apostles and eaten with the them Paschal supper as prescribed by the law, He proceeded to bestow upon them one more, perhaps the greatest, evidence of His love, the Blessed Sacrament. But, for the reception of this unspeakable mystery, the greatest purity of heart is required, wherefore He prepared them by an act of Divine condescension. "He riseth from supper, and layeth aside His garments: and having taken a towel girded Himself. And after that He putteth water into a basin, and began to wash the feet of His disciples. It takes the purifying act of God, the aid of His grace, of the sacramental absolution to prepare one for this Sacrament. St. Peter, recoiling from our Lord's self-abasement, ashamed that he should be a willing part in our Lord's humiliation, cries: "Lord, Thou shalt never wash my feet," and is answered: "If I wash thee not, thou shalt have no part with Me,"—no part in the good gift that was about to be bestowed, no part in His grace, no part in His glory . . . "Lord, wash not only my feet but my hands and my head." St. Peter knew not then what our Lord was doing, but later he did, and later we learn from him, that heart and hands, mind and will, body and soul should be washed clean by repentance and by the divine forgiveness, from every stain of sin and of affection for what is sinful, before we dare approach the table of the Lord. And then when our Lord had seated Himself at the table, the old rite gave place to the new, the awful mystery was accomplished. Bread and wine obeying their Creator, became His Body and Blood . . . "This is My Body, this is

My Blood." "Take ye all and eat." And they received the first Communion of the Christian Church. If we deck our churches and our children with all the beauty and splendor we can afford when they are about to receive their first Communion surely the light of Christ's countenance made beautiful beyond compare the room wherein that Sacrament was first conferred. It is a gleam of splendor amid the gloom of Passion-tide. But even on that brightness there is a spot, which goes far to explain the sad necessity of the Passion. Even among those twelve chosen ones, one was a devil. Even among that highly favored few, one, in spite of Christ's washing, was unclean; one was guilty of the first of the long series of sacrileges, which has made the monument of Christ's love, a monument of man's ingratitude.

POINT I.

Sacrilege is the profanation of holy things. And what can be more holy than the Body and Blood of God made man; of Him whose coming made immaculate the body and soul of His Mother; who could defy the world of His enemies to convince Him of sin; of Him in whose sight the angels are not pure, before whom the four and twenty ancients, representative of the holiest of God's servants, fall down in adoration, crying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth;" who is God infinitely holy, holiness itself? And what greater profanation could there be than to induct One so holy into a heart polluted, occupied by sin? It is an act of supreme condescension which brings Him there. We at our purest and best can never be worthy of receiving Him. On the other hand, sin is His greatest enemy, more abhorrent than Satan, more hateful than hell itself, for sin is the cause of their being what they are. The sufferings of the Passion are the measure of God's hatred for sin. What wrong can be compared to the crime that thrusts the body of Christ into that abode of filth, that house of hatred, a sinful bosom?

The treason of Judas hardly differs from it either in kind or degree. Of that unhappy apostle's state of conscience we know but little, except that he had harbored an inordinate affection for money, and that in return for thirty pieces of silver promised him by the chief priests, he engaged to betray our Lord to them so that they might lay hands on Him. A deep and deadly sin,

as soon as determined upon, even before the deed was enacted. And in such a state he dared to look upon the living face of our Lord, to eat His Body and drink His Blood. No wonder that "after the morsel, Satan entered into him" (John 13: 27); that with the particle that should have brought grace, Satan came; with the food that should have brought salvation, he ate judgment. His course after that moment—the midnight journey among the torches and clubs of the priests' rabble, the meeting in the garden, the traitor's kiss, aye, and even the traitor's death, are but the natural sequence of events—seems determined less by new acts of his will than by circumstances.

And yet that fearful crime is often fearfully reënacted. Many there are who cherish some inordinate love, commit sinful deeds in pursuit of it, and are as guilty as Judas. Have you never betrayed your Lord? aye, betrayed Him to the cross? For what says St. Paul? They who sin, "crucify again to themselves, the Son of God, and make a mockery of Him" (Heb. 6: 6). Have you never betrayed the love and confidence with which He trusts Himself to you in Holy Communion, by receiving Him into a soul where Satan has already entered, which has committed and is ready to commit sin at his bidding? And for what? For thirty pieces of silver? Perhaps for less; for the gratification of a petty spite, of an unlawful desire, for the acquisition of some small gain, for fear of some slight scoff.

Point II.

The punishment of Judas was swift and terrible, but that of the unworthy communicant is not less sure. Time for repentance is often given, it is true; but it were unwarranted presumption to expect it. For the most part unworthy Communion entails fearful consequences both here and hereafter. Irreverence for what should be revered hardens the heart. It is therefore but reasonable to expect that so great a profanation of a thing so sacred, so divine, should be followed by such insensibility to moral obligations as is depicted by the expression of the Evangelist in regard to Judas, "after the morsel, Satan entered into him." Truly he enters the soul that has thus invited him, blinding it to all religious duties, blinding it like the heart of the rebellious people of God, lest it should see with its eyes, and be converted, and God should heal it; blinding it to the force of

the obligations of the law, to the meaning of its precepts, and the terrors of its sanction; blinding it to the light of God's grace, and the brightness of His glory; hardening his heart so that neither love nor gratitude, shame nor fear can use their salutary influence in restraining him from sin, and urging him onward in the way of God's commandments; instilling into his heart, despair—if not such as prompts him to such a deed as that of Judas—despair that deprives him of the joys and advantages of the virtue of hope, and leaves him to walk the earth already judged, for he has eaten judgment to himself (1 Cor. 11 : 27).

And the sentence of that judgment is eternal death. We find it revolting to imagine an individual creature suffering the torments of hell; but less difficulty in allotting that punishment to the betrayer of his Lord. Even Judas penitent would have been forgiven. For the impenitent betrayer of his Lord in the Sacrament of his Love, for him whose treacherous lips have betrayed the Lord, not to sinners but to the foulness of sin itself, surely for them, if for any, all the torments divine justice has ordained are adequate.

Conclusion.

"Let a man prove himself," says St. Paul, "and so let him eat of this bread" (1 Cor. 27 : 29). Let him probe deep into his conscience and see whether there is ought there that can offend the Divine Guest he invites. Let him judge himself, lest he eat judgment. Having learned his condition, let him humbly and sorrowfully charge himself with his sins in the tribunal of Penance. Let him there wash in the Blood that was shed for his sins; wash his feet and his hands, his head and his heart of all that might render him unworthy, lest he should be guilty of the Body and Blood of the Lord, lest with the outraged morsel Satan enter into him, and he be given over to evil desires. Let him put forth not merely the remains of past sin, but all affection for sin and the occasions of sin, that the Pasch which our Lord desires so earnestly to eat with us may preserve body and soul to everlasting life.

References.

Holy Scripture.—If any one that is defiled shall eat of the flesh of the sacrifice of peace offerings, which is offered to the Lord, he shall be cut off from his people.—Lev. 7 : 20.

The Lord slew the men of Bethsames, because they had seen the ark of the Lord.—1 Kings 6: 19.

The indignation of the Lord was enkindled against Oza and he struck him for his rashness, and he died there before the ark of the Lord.—2 Kings 6: 7.

Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be cleansed: Thou shalt wash me and I shall be made whiter than snow.—Ps. 50: 9.

Wash me yet more from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.—Ps. 50: 4.

What is the meaning that my beloved hath wrought such wickedness in my house? Shall the Holy Flesh take away from thee thy crimes, in which thou hast boasted?—Jer. 11: 15.

I am become a laughing-stock all the day, and a scoff to my people.—Jer. 20: 7.

Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof.—Matt. 8: 8.

Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having on a wedding garment? But he was silent. Then the king said to the waiters: Bind his hands and feet and cast him into the exterior darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.—Matt. 22: 12, 13.

Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?—John 6: 72.

After the morsel, Satan entered into him.—John 13: 27.

Forthwith coming to Jesus, he said: Hail, Rabbi! And he kissed Him.—Matt. 26: 49.

This he said because he was a thief.—John 12: 6.

Whosoever shall eat this bread or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily: shall be guilty of the Body and of the Blood of the Lord.—1 Cor. 11: 27.

But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of the chalice.—1 Cor. 11: 28.

For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself: not discerning the body of the Lord.—1 Cor. 11: 29.

Holy Fathers.—Take heed lest you become like Herod, and say, "I also would come and adore Him;" for they are like Herod who abuse the mystery of Communion by receiving it unworthily.—St. John Chrys., *Hom. 7 in Matt.*

It is not less horrible to receive the Son of God into a pol-

luted mouth, than to thrust him into filth.—St. John Chrys., *Hom. 27 in 1 Cor.*

Judas drank but was not satisfied, nor did he quench the thirst of the eternal fire, for he received the mystery of Christ unworthily.—St. Jer., *in Luc.*

If a dirty garment is not placed in a precious casket, how dare we receive the Eucharist of Christ into a soul stained with the filth of sin ?—St. Aug., *Serm 252 de Temp.*

A pure conscience is one that has no just cause for accusation in the past, no unjust delight in the present, no unjust wish for the future.—St. Bern., *T. 2, S. 27, Art 2, C. 2.*

This is the true bread of the children which should not be given to dogs.—St. Thom. Aq., *Lauda Sion.*

Remember that the effects of the Sacraments are usually proportionate to the disposition and preparation of the receiver.—St. Bonav., *Theol. Myst.*

Many are horrified at the crime of Judas, who do not avoid committing it.—St. Leo, *De Pass. Chr.*

EASTER.

FIRST PLAN.

THE KING OF GLORY.

Introduction.—Christ is risen.
Point I. . . .—His incomparable victory.
Subdivision 1.—Greater than any human triumph.
Subdivision 2.—Greater than the wonders of nature.
Subdivision 3.—Greater than any miracle.
Point II. . .—His victory over sin.
Subdivision 1.—Sin ruled the world.
Subdivision 2.—Christ overcame it.
Point III. .—His victory over death.
Subdivision 1.—By sin came death and suffering.
Subdivision 2.—Christ conquered both.
Conclusion. .—Welcome the King of Glory.

SECOND PLAN.

SPIRITUAL RESURRECTION.

(*Bossuet.*)

Text. . . . .—"If you be risen with Christ, seek the things that are above . . . not the things that are upon the earth." Col. 3: 1–2.

Introduction.—All have died in sin, but may rise in Christ.

Point I. . . .—We should purify our temples.

Subdivision 1.—Our bodies are the temples of God.

Subdivision 2.—How we should purify these temples.

Point II. . .—We should consecrate them.

Subdivision 1.—By consecrating our souls and their faculties to God.

Subdivision 2.—By consecrating our bodies and their powers.

Point III. .—We should guard and perfect our temples.

Subdivision 1.—By unceasing effort.

Subdivision 2.—By constant vlgilance.

FIRST PLAN.

The King of Glory.

Text.—"Lift up your gates, O ye princes, and be ye lifted up, O eternal gates: and the King of Glory shall enter in. Who is the King of Glory? The Lord who is strong and mighty: the Lord mighty in battle, the Lord of hosts, He is the King of Glory."—Ps. 23: 7–10.

INTRODUCTION.

Picture an Easter morning in Rome, in the time of the early Christians. The brightness of the spring morning brings all classes of citizens forth into the streets. Notice the hollow and enforced mirth of the various classes of citizens, the evidence of a nation degenerating, dying from the effects of vice. Remark the degradation of the slave, the depraved tastes of the free plebeian, the depravity of the Roman matron, the luxury of the patrician, etc. There is one class, however, whose joy seems genuine, whose faces beam with a light and a happiness that is unquestionably real; a class which greets each other as with a password, "Christ is risen." He who lived like us in poverty and suffering and died nailed to a cross, "unto the Jews indeed a stumbling-block, and unto the Gentiles, foolishness" (1 Cor.

1 : 23), has risen triumphant from His grave. His followers, though for the most part poor and in constant suffering, though they have risen before daylight to seek and receive the body of their Lord amidst the abodes of the dead, for fear of their persecutors, are triumphant and joyous to-day, with a joy that no man can take from them, for the Lord is risen indeed and hath appeared to Simon (Luke 24 : 34). To them and to us it is rightly a day of unalloyed rejoicing. We celebrate the triumphs of our nation, and the memory of those who have benefited their kind. But there is no victory so great, no benefit of such importance as that which we commemorate to-day, for the Lord is risen, conqueror over our greatest foes, over sin and death.

POINT I.

The Resurrection was a triumph unparalleled in human history. The achievements of kings or conquerors, of artists or inventors, of philanthropists and saints, nay even the miracles of Divine Power itself, pale into insignificance before its glory. In all man's deeds there is nothing to which we may liken it. To illustrate it we must have recourse to God's own handiwork, in the typical miracles of the Old Testament, in the yearly renewal of nature, in the raising to life of Lazarus (John 11), of the daughter of Jairus (Mark 5 : 22 ff.), and the son of the widow of Naim (Luke 7 : 11), in the action of grace raising to life the soul dead in sin, or in raising soul and body to eternal life. Even these are less wonderful, because in the Resurrection it is the power of the Subject Himself that wrought the wonder. He that was dead raises Himself by His own power. The triumph is great not only in the difficulty of the achievement, but also in the incomparable results for the good of mankind resulting from it. None other than the Lord of hosts, the King of glory, strong and mighty in battle, could have wrested the victory from such foes.

POINT II.

His was a victory over sin. In spite of frequent communication with God through Patriarch and Prophet, despite the giving of the law because of transgression, "all men like sheep had gone astray" (Is. 53 : 6).

The great body of mankind had forgotten their Creator. Surrounded by the works of His omnipotence, guided and sus-

tained by the finger that numbered the hairs of their heads, they might have seen Him everywhere. But because, looking on Him in the works of His hands, they did not glorify Him as God, nor gave thanks, God gave them up to the desires of their hearts (Rom. 1 : 21 ff). St. Paul draws a vivid picture of how the heathen world was given over to sin. (Which may be worked out in detail from profane history.) Even God's chosen people, His sacred nation, with the exception of a few holy souls, had grown so old in the service of sin, so hardened, so blind, that they no longer knew the spirit of God in Christ's teaching, the finger of God in His miracles, God's mercy in His death, or God's Divinity in His Resurrection. So blind that the ideal man of Christ's teaching and example, was to them indistinct as the "men like trees walking" of the blind man of St. Mark's Gospel (Mark 8 : 24). So used to sin's corruption that they cared not for a Redeemer to wash it away; they looked but for a King of glory who was to subdue in battle the nations of the earth. Need we look far to find men as blind in our own day? Man unredeemed, unaided by the grace of God, toils, oppressed with the burden of sin and remorse, sorrow and death, groping in darkness, along a weary way that ends in horrors that none can depict. Where then was the hero that was to beat down the tyrant and break the chains of the captive? He came at last, and we contemplated Him a few days ago, nailed to a cross. But who, save they who, like the faithful few who stood at the foot of that tree, saw by the light of faith, could recognize in that mangled Victim the promised King of Glory? Who would think that the nails which fastened that bloodless Body to the cross, fixed also to that tree of ignominy the decree that was against us (Col. 2 : 14)? But to-day when calling back the wasted material of His Body, and summoning back the departed soul with the same word of power by which He first breathed the breath of life into a body of clay, He comes forth from the tomb, men readily behold in Him a God. Now we know the King of glory, strong and mighty in battle. We see that if He suffered, it was not through His lack of power, but because on Him had been laid the iniquity of us all (Is. 53 : 6); that the price of His Blood was of value sufficient to satisfy for all sin, that our enemy was routed, our chains were broken; that deliverance from past sin and strength against future temptation

were at the disposal of all who should call upon His Name. Now we know the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world.

POINT III.

Behold in Him the victor over death. For the sting of death is sin (1 Cor. 15 : 56). Of death, and all that misery and decay which is but part of death and came into the world with it. Need we speak of the wretchedness of mankind, of the extent of poverty and sickness, ignorance and want, of man's inhumanity to his fellow-man, enriching or otherwise gratifying his own desires at the expense of another's happiness and life, at the expense perhaps of his eternal life? Of the bereavements, of the pains and terrors of death? Can we not see deeply enough into the mystery of life to know that most of these are the consequences of some one's sin? And though our observation be insufficient to enable us to formulate a general rule, have we not the inspired assurance of the apostle that death and all its attendant miseries came into the world because of that sin that made us all sinners? (Rom. 5 : 12.) Is there one of us who can say that he has suffered more than he has deserved? And if we could, is there not a Providence to make the balance even, in "the world that sets this right?" That which makes suffering evil is not the pain which we endure. That which makes death terrible is not the shuddering of our nature as we approach that fearful bourne. No, not these, but sin, and the fear of the punishment of sin. "Fear not him who can kill the body, but him who can cast body and soul into hell." (Luke 12 : 5.) Christ coming forth from the tomb triumphant over sin, is the conqueror of sin's offspring, death. To-day we are free, free from the sting of suffering and of death, free from eternal death, if we will but embrace the freedom offered us. Liberated from that, we can defiantly cry, "O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? But thanks be to God who hath given us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. 15 : 53–55.)

CONCLUSION.

Lift then your gates that the King of glory may enter in. The gates of death that never reopened for the return of mortal man save at God's almighty word, are lifted to-day before their Master. His ministering angels roll back the stone that closed

the sepulchre upon Him, and the imperishable gates of heaven are thrown wide to receive Him who went forth to combat and to die, and now returns, the Conqueror, the King of Glory. There remain only the gates of which we are the princes, the gates of our hearts where He longs to enter and to repose. There are many on this glorious Easter morning who entertain in their hearts sin and its ill-gotten gains, pleasures and honors, and so bar out sin's conqueror; who fondle death and corruption while He who can make our death like His a triumph is shut without. Be not you like these: throw wide the gates where He stands and knocks, and the Lord of hosts, the King of glory will enter in.

REFERENCES.

Holy Scripture.—I know that my Redeemer liveth, and in the last day I shall rise out of the earth, and I shall be clothed again with my skin, and in my flesh I shall see my God.—Job 19:25.

I have slept and have taken my rest; and have risen up, because the Lord hath protected me.—Ps. 3:6.

My flesh hath rejoiced in hope; because Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, nor wilt Thou give Thy holy one to see corruption.—Ps. 15:9–10.

His sepulchre shall be glorious.—Is. 11:10.

O death, I will be thy death, O hell, I will be thy bite.—Osee 13:14.

Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things, . . . and be put to death, and the third day rise again.—Matt. 16:21; Luke 9:22.

The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: and they shall kill Him and the third day He will rise again.—Matt. 17:21; 20:19.

An evil and adulterous generation seeketh a sign: and a sign shall not be given to it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet. For as Jonas was in the whale's belly three days and three nights, so shall the Son of man be in the heart of the earth three days and three nights.—Matt. 12:39–40.

The angel answering said to the women: He is not here; for He is risen as He said.—Matt. 18:5–6; Mark 16:6.

Jesus answered: Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up. But He spoke of the temple of His body.—John 2:19.

I lay down my life that I may take it again. No man taketh it away from Me: but I lay it down of Myself, and I have power to lay it down: and I have power to take it up again.—John 10: 17–18.

With great power did the apostles give testimony of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord.—Acts 4: 33.

As Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in the newness of life.—Rom. 6: 4.

He that raised up Jesus Christ from the dead, shall quicken also your mortal bodies.—Rom. 8: 11.

If Christ be not risen again, then is our preaching vain, and your faith also is vain.—1 Cor. 15: 14.

For if the dead rise not again, neither is Christ risen again. Then they also that are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.—1 Cor. 15: 16, 18.

Christ is risen from the dead, the first fruit of them that sleep.—1 Cor. 15: 20.

For by a man came death, and by a man the resurrection of the dead.—1 Cor. 15: 21.

Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?—1 Cor. 15: 54.

We look for the Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ, who will reform the body of our lowness, made like to the body of His glory.—Phil. 3: 21.

If you be risen with Christ, seek the things that are above . . . not the things that are upon the earth.—Col. 3: 1–2.

I am alive and was dead, and have the keys of death and hell.—Apoc. 1: 18.

Holy Fathers.—The whole order of the revolving world testifies to the resurrection of the dead; God proclaimed it by His works before He did so in words.—Tertullian.

The fact of the resurrection is made indisputable by the miracles.—St. John Chrys., *Hom. I in Act.*

After sufferings and wounds in the flesh, after death itself, Christ rose from the tomb.—St. Jer., *de Res., S. 3.*

The resurrection was real, not in appearance only.—St. Jer., *Ep. ad Pammach.*

Our Head is risen, let the other members hope for what they see in the Head.—St. Aug., *in Ps.* 29.

It was a greater thing to rise from the sepulchre, than to have come down from the cross.—St. Aug., *Serm. 18 de Verb sec. Matt.*

He will rise happily in the body, who has already risen in the spirit.—St. Aug., *Serm. 121.*

Christ suffered and died and rose again, showing by His Passion how we may hope to suffer for the truth, by His Resurrection what we may hope for in eternity.—St. Aug., *L. 8 de Civ. Dei, C. 49.*

That body which was crucified became impassible; that which was put to death, immortal; that which was wounded, incorruptible.—St. Leo, *Serm. 1 de Resur.*

The glory of the rising Lord buried the ignominy of His death.—St. John Chrys., *de Resur.*

Our Redeemer bore death that we might not fear death, He rose that we might hope to rise.—St. Greg., *Moral. 14.*

After the resurrection our flesh will be the same by nature, but different by glory.—*Id.*, *Ibid.*

Figures of the Resurrection.

The Paschal Lamb.—"Christ our Pasch is immolated."—1 Cor. 5 : 7.

Jonas.—"A sign shall not be given but the sign of Jonas." Matt. 12 : 39.

The Temple.—"Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up."—John 2 : 19–21.

Joseph, leaving prison.—Gen. 41.

Daniel, leaving the lions' den.—Dan. 6.

Samson, leaving Gaza.—Judges 16.

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St. Greg., Nyss., 5 Orat. in Pasch.
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St. John Chrys., 2 Hom. in Resur.
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St. Bernard, 4 Serm. in Fest. Pasch.
St. Thomas, 3 Serm. in Resur.

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Catech. Conc. Trid., De Symb.
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Almsgiving.—"Would you be a wise merchant, a clever business man?" asks St. Augustine. "Then give to the poor that which you cannot possibly retain for yourself beyond a few years, and receive in exchange that which you cannot lose in all eternity. For a little you receive a hundredfold. For a temporal good—an eternal inheritance."

Christian Courage.—St. Polycarp went, as we read in his life described by the historian Eusebius, to meet those who were in search of him to bring him as a condemned Christian before the pagan tribunal. He told them that he would help them to find the accused man, whom the officers did not recognize. Then he led them to the house where he stayed, showed them every hospitality and left them alone for awhile that he might prepare for death. When he returned he told them with smiling countenance, that he was the man they sought and was ready to go with them.

Forgiveness.—In the city of Bologna, in Italy, there is a street called *La strada pia* (street of charity). It is related that it obtained the name from the following fact: In one of the palaces on this street there lived a noble lady, a widow, who had an only child. One day the little boy was playing before the house when a half-drunken soldier, who passed by, began to tease the child. In the course of his rude jests the unfortunate man caused the boy to fall, so that the point of his sword pierced it in a vital part. In a short time the boy bled to death, and the frantic soldier, recognizing his crime and fearing the penalty, ran into the open house near by to hide himself. Shortly afterward the officers of justice came to search for the criminal at the house of the mother, who had not yet been informed that the victim of his drunken folly was her own child. Learning that the man had committed a murder without intending it, she felt it instinctively her Christian duty to shield him. When they tell her that the dead body without is that of her own son—she staggers pale as death into her oratory, casts herself at the feet of her crucifix, and cries out: "My God, hast Thou permitted this? Thy holy will be done. Yet I will not that two lives be sacrificed for one. If for love of Thee I hoped to shield the senseless murderer who knew not what he did, shall self-love prevail upon me to have my child avenged?" Then turning to the officers of the law she besought them to go and not disturb the house of death in search of the murderer —until later. Her wish prevailed, and she aided the poor soldier, heart-sore and changed from that hour into a penitent, to make his escape.

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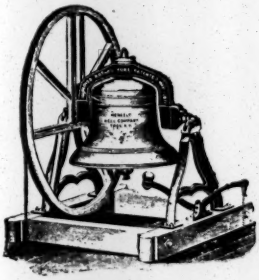

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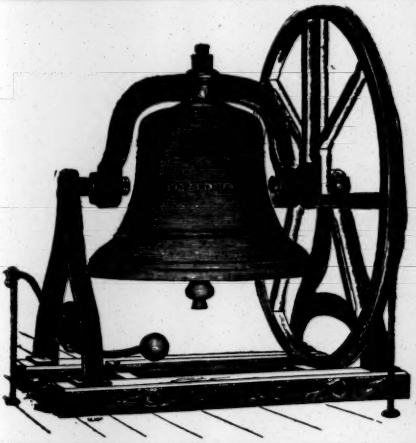

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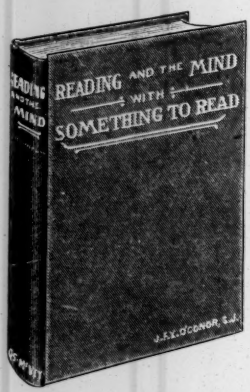

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